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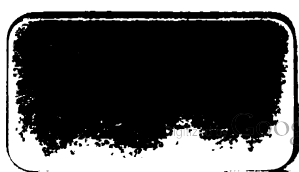
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**ANNALS
OF THE SOCIETY OF
THE HOLY CHILDHOOD,
FOR THE
REDEMPTION OF PAGAN CHILDREN.**

Translated and abridged from the French.

VOL. VII.

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ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 69.—JANUARY, 1866.

The following table shows the reports sent in from the various missions connected with the Society of the Holy Childhood in foreign parts, to the Central Committee of the same Society at Paris, for the year 1864.

Designation of the various Missions.	Numbers of Missions helped.	Number of Baptisms.	Number of children brought up.	Observations.
Society of Jesus,	7	21,173	9,663	18 Missions which receive help from the Holy Childhood had not yet sent in their reports when the rest were made up.
Congregation of Lazarists,	7	31,855	5,680	
Congregation of Foreign Missions,	21	249,023	4,513	
Different Missions,	28	55,502	3,560	
Total	63	357,353	24,316	

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

CHINA.

Extract from a letter from Rt. Rev. Dr. Guillemin, Vic. apost. of Kouang-Tong and Kouang-Si, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Canton, 18th August, 1864.

.....Bands of rebels appeared last year at the extremity of this province, on the borders of Kouang-Tong and Kouang-Si, and

carried fire and bloodshed with them. A boy of fifteen, after seeing his father and mother strangled before his face, himself fell into the hands of the imperial soldiers, who took him into their service. The mother of this boy had been baptised a short time previously, and her maternal love had prompted her frequently to speak to her son of the beauty and advantages of the Christian religion. He faithfully remembered these precious lessons. He was brought to Canton with the soldiers, where he heard persons speak of the worshippers of the true God. He spared no pains to discover the place of our residence, and to throw himself into our arms. He related his story in the simplest manner, and begged to be received into one of our schools that his instruction might be completed, and himself disposed for holy Baptism. One day when he was walking with his comrades, under the care of the Sin-chang, or school master, the little band unluckily passed before the guard house, in which the boy has been shut up, and in which there was still a party of soldiers. He was immediately recognised, and one of the satellites seizing him by the hair dragged him within, neither the prayers of the Catechist nor the cries of his little comrades, having any effect in inducing him to relinquish his hold. By a singular Providence I passed the same way a few minutes afterwards, and being perceived by the Catechist, he came, much affected, to tell me of what had taken place. I immediately went to the guard house, where in the midst of a crowd of soldiers and young girls, I found the poor boy seated upon a bench weeping. I carried him off, and reproaching the soldiers with their misconduct, I told them that if they had any complaints to make, they would find me with the boy at the old palace of Yeh, at one o'clock, and we would examine the question. The next day, five satellites failed not to appear at the appointed time and place. I explained the position and the rights of the child. "We are Christians," I said, "and as such, not one of us, either European or Chinese, can be sold or taken away against his own will. This boy is sixteen; he is of an age to speak for himself and has perfect liberty to follow the course he likes best. If he wishes to go with you, I make no opposition, but if he desires to remain with us, no power in Canton can hinder him; for this is the agreement which has been entered into between your Emperor and ours. The boy then is to make his choice."

The moment was critical; the sight of the satellites with their uniforms and their arms which they had purposely assumed, could not but intimidate our youth. The chief of the satellites was not at all more certain of his success. He therefore asked my permission to speak to him in private. On my consenting he took

him to a retired part of the garden, where they remained about a quarter of an hour. On their return to me I again reminded them of the perfect liberty granted to christians, and addressing myself to the boy I asked him which he would do. "*I will remain with the Bishop,*" he replied in a firm voice, and prostrating himself before an image of our Lord in the arms of His Blessed Mother which was in my room, he thanked Him aloud for having protected him. He then threw himself at my feet, thanking me in my turn, and begged me to continue to be a father to him. Even the satellites could no more than myself refrain themselves from a degree of emotion at this touching scene, which was quite unexpected. The reply was decisive—the victory complete; I thanked God who can thus when He pleases, loose the tongues of children, and give them a degree of courage unexampled amongst the offspring of paganism. The satellites seeing themselves vanquished in this point, could not be satisfied without demanding compensation for the expenses they had been at, in the support of this boy during four or five months. Unwilling to repel them and particularly to bring upon myself the police, so generally feared in the town, I gave them ten piastres (about £2,) and they departed repeating these words: "*Here at least is a just man, who can understand things.*" I was not much distressed at this little expense, for as I had only just received some alms from a school of little girls at Besançon, I employed it in this manner, and could thus make these dear children participators in this good work. Their little protégé is now at school, preparing for his first communion, and giving us great satisfaction. May he always be faithful to the signal favour which he has received from heaven.

Extract from a letter from Sister Martha, Daughter of Charity at Tien-Tsin (Tohely) to the Director of the Holy Childhood.

Tien-Tsin, House of St. Joseph, January 28, 1865.

.....About two years ago, a poor young pagan woman sought refuge with us for herself and five children. Her husband, brutalized, like so many others, by the use of opium, had forsaken her, having first sold the whole of their little possessions, and so left her without shelter and without bread. We did not of course repulse her; her coming was too fortunate an event. She was admitted as a nurse, and her children were given up to our care. The eldest was about fifteen, and having been betrothed, according to Chinese custom, from an early age, and thus consecrated, she

was very soon to leave us. When however the parents of the young man learned that their future daughter-in-law was amongst the Europeans, they thought themselves dishonoured, and became violently angry. "How," said they, "give our son to a woman who has been with the white devils? We should be a joke amongst our friends and neighbours. And besides, what good can come from those quarters?" Do not be surprised at all this, Rev. Sir, it is the consequence of Chinese prejudice, but these prejudices are gradually fading away, and we hope with a little patience, they will entirely disappear. In short the affair was broken off, and the poor mother, believing that the future prospects of her daughter were ruined, came weeping to tell us her sorrow. We could not help inwardly rejoicing; the girl was gentle and docile, she learned the Christian doctrine with ardour, and promised to become so good a Christian that it would have grieved us to give her to pagans. But Chinese customs are such, that a young girl who has been affianced, belongs more to her husband's family than to her own; large sums having frequently been given at the time of the contract. Neither the parents of the girl nor she herself can retreat for any reason whatsoever, whilst the young man or his parents may break their word if they please. There is thus the same slavery with regard to women here which existed in pagan antiquity. In order to comfort the poor mother we were trying to find some other match, when all at once our pagans thought better of it and resumed their rights. It was now our time for lamentation, for we saw the evil one ready to snatch from us this dear young soul, before she could even be regenerated in the salutary waters of Baptism. It was impossible to baptize her before her marriage on account of the superstitious acts which accompany that ceremony, and which would in a measure have forced her to apostatize, at least in appearance. On the other hand, how dared we hope that this girl would be able to resist the solicitations of her new family, without Baptismal Grace; she who as yet knew so imperfectly, our holy religion? These thoughts made us very unhappy on the day of her marriage, but we committed her to Divine Providence and placed her under the protection of our Immaculate Mother by a little medal, which we recommended her always to keep about her. We then left her in the hands of the women who were to dress her. It would be useless to describe, Rev. Sir, the absurd and ridiculous ornaments with which she was loaded; I will only remark that everything in China, is in exact opposition to our own customs, so that while in France our brides are clothed in white, the Chinese ladies wear red. Poor girl, she seemed indeed a victim destined for sacrifice. A long robe of red cloth embroidered with

serpents and dragons reached to her feet; and a head-dress of gilt pasteboard made her look like a stage queen. Her head was covered with a thick red veil, that she might neither see, nor be seen, and be taken, or rather torn from her mother's arms. A red chair, likewise embroidered with winged dragons, was prepared at the door of the room that she might not put her foot on the ground. She was hermetically enclosed in it, and the bearers carried her off to the sound of music such as might distract even the least sensitive ears. The poor mother wept and so did we. As to the girl, she was sad but calm and resigned. She felt that she had strength in her soul to sustain the contest, in which she was about to engage. From the first day she declared with gentle firmness that she would take no part in any superstitious practice, and she was left free. She followed as far as possible the little rules to which she had been accustomed in this house. She never omitted her morning and evening prayers, nor saying her rosary, &c., and was careful, as we had recommended, to be always gentle, active and docile. Grace triumphed, and the hearts which seemed so ill-disposed, were speedily gained over. A few days after her marriage, flesh meat was served on Friday; the young bride did not eat but wept silently. "What is the matter, my child?" said her mother-in-law, are you ill?" "No," she replied, "but the law of the Christians forbids the use of this food, and I weep because you do not yet know it." "Never mind," said the mother, "dry your tears, we will not force your conscience," and she immediately had something else brought in. This was not all; the dear child gained such influence in her husband's family, that at last they burned their idols. Not only did the husband come in his turn to visit the "white devils," no longer so called, in order to see his mother-in-law, but he soon went to the missionaries for instruction in our holy religion, all of which he reported to his aged mother. Let us hope that they will all persevere. The young wife has already received the reward of her courage. On Christmas-day, not only the holy water of Baptism was poured upon her forehead, but she also, for the first time, received the King of heaven and earth into her heart. Her tears flowed abundantly, and eager for the happiness which is tasted at the holy table, she has again been to seek its celestial sweetness. Her mother is also to be baptized on the 2nd of February, the feast of the Purification, as well as three or four other serving women.

Accept Rev. Sir, &c. &c.

Sister Martha, Daughter of Charity.

From the Rev. Fr. Vielmon, of the Congregation of Foreign Missions, Missionary Apostolic to Kouy-Tcheou, to the Director of the Holy Childhood,

Kouy-Yang, 5th Dec. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

Kouy-Tcheou, as its name indicates, is indeed a precious land, and above all for the Holy Childhood, which is making great progress here.

The ceremony of taking possession of the two establishments for foundlings, made over to us by the Chinese government, had already made a great stir when another took place which produced much more effect.

Our establishment, which is in the town and joins on to the pretorium of the prefect, had been repaired, or rather rebuilt. Bishop Faurie gave it a solemn benediction, and St. Nicholas as the patron saint. The day of that consecration will be a marked one in the annals of Kouy-Tcheou. Not only the church, quite lately a pagoda, but the courts, the surrounding houses, the streets, all were crowded with the curious, whose numbers were continually on the increase. The whole town was in movement. His lordship delivered a discourse on the occasion, a copy of which is still affixed to the wall of the house. He praised the wisdom of the Emperors, who from the remotest times have thought on the means for the relief of every kind of misery, with an eloquence equally captivating to the hearts of the literati and of the people; he enumerated all the benevolent institutions of China, which are indeed not a few. Establishments for distributing rice to the poor, establishments for the aged and infirm, establishments for widows and orphans. His lordship observed that of all these good works that for foundlings ought to excite the greatest commiseration, were it only because these unfortunate little ones are incapable of soliciting the succour which their feeble age requires. "But," added his lordship, "the misfortunes of the times, rebellion, pestilence, and other scourges, by exhausting the public treasury, have reduced the mandarins to a state which renders it impossible for them, in spite of their earnest desire, to fulfil the intentions of the emperor. We then, as the interpreters of his great intention, are happy to lend our feeble aid to a work which interests every compassionate heart."

This discourse soon found an echo. Presents of all kinds arrived that very day. Our chapel was ornamented with tablets and painting by the chief nobility of the town, and we were supplied

with cloth for the dresses of the nurses and children. Even the mandarins from the neighbouring towns came to congratulate us, and those who had not already seen our orphanage in the pretorium of Tien-ta-Ten wished to visit it.

Before the visitors had departed, the bell rang for the end of recreation. Surprised at no longer hearing a single word from the mouths of so many boys a General remarked to me that they were well disciplined children, and would make hereafter very good soldiers.

The General was right; we had a proof of this in a boy of fifteen. Paul Yang was in the company of a missionary; they were in a town which towards midnight was attacked by some hundreds of rebels and brigands. The confusion was complete, the flight general; and the mandarin could not make himself heard. As the Chinese believe that Europeans possess talents of every kind, the mandarin begged the missionary to take the direction of the national guard. The missionary willingly undertook this, and put himself at the head of the troop, armed with his telescope, which the rebels mistook for a European gun. The catechists had already taken flight, one only remained at the side of the missionary, and this was the pupil of the Holy Childhood, Paul Yang. The missionary warned him of his danger, and permitted him to go. "How," replied Paul, "has the father come so far to save my body and soul, for I should have been dead long since without the help of the holy Church, and shall I forsake him in the hour of danger? No. I should not dare to appear before God were I guilty of such ingratitude. If I die at the father's side I shall only have paid my debt of gratitude."

He did not go a step from the missionary till the end of the affair, and distinguished himself so greatly that he deserved to be recommended to the attention of the viceroy.

Paul is about to be decorated with a button and peacock's feather. The peacock's feather is a mark of great merit, and many a mandarin wears it who has not won it so well as Paul Yang.

This affair has contributed not a little to increase the good opinion held of our schools. Several mandarins have applied to me for children to be taken into their suite.

How much good then is done by the Christian children of Europe and the world! If I could see them and they could hear my voice, I would say: "O generous children! O blessed children! O young apostles! how happy you are. Like valiant warriors you are incessantly gaining victories over Satan." The Holy Childhood already flourishes in several towns of Kouy-Tcheou. The asylums for foundlings built by the orders of the emperor are in

your hands through his representative, and it is you who administer them. Give one more assault and your triumph in the province will be complete.

Intrepid labourers ! I cannot increase your zeal, for it is already most ardent; but I pray the Lord to bless it, and to make it bring forth much fruit, as well as to bestow upon you His great benediction. And you, my dear friends, forget not to pray for the missionaries.

Accept, Rev. Sir, my profound respect,
Your much honoured servant,
Vielmon, Miss. Apost.
of the Cong. of Foreign Missions.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Eustace Zanoli, Vic. Apost. of Hou-pe, to
the Director of the Holy Childhood.

Rev. Sir,

The past year will long be remembered as a remarkable one to this Vicariate. If on one hand we have suffered more heavy losses from the rebels and from fires than in all the preceding years, it has on the other hand brought us much good spiritual fruit. Four different localities have been opened to the faith, the last of which reckons two hundred families, who on the arrival of the missionary, burned their idols and adored the true God. It is true that they have not yet been baptised, and may draw back under any difficulty, as so often happens; but still the first step has been taken, and I am pleased with the hope that God will grant to me that I may be a means of bringing at least the greater number of these people into the fold. The Holy Childhood has greatly contributed to these conversions, the first notion of Christianity having been brought to them by a baptiser of the Apostolic Pro-Vicariate of Kiang-Si, who having been invited to the adjacent province of Hou-pe that he might visit the sick people of Kien-Kiang, spoke to his auditors so well and so persuasively, that they have already twice come to beg for a missionary. I thought it my duty to satisfy them, and sent them a Chinese priest who by his virtues and his charity has himself converted in the course of a few years, more than a thousand infidels. The result was most satisfactory, and wherever he appeared as a native priest, his presence has indeed been a triumph for religion; the literati going to meet him with their buttons and holiday dresses, and others with petards and Chinese instruments. As they had heard that at the first place where he had stopped, he had had all idols and super-

stitious objects taken from the houses, these pagans threw their *pousses* of their own accord, either into the river or the fire before he arrived at their houses; the most timid among them giving them to the care of such of their relations as did not wish to be converted. There were two pagodas which were the property of the new Christians. These were quickly purified from all superstitions, and the owners begged that our missionary should celebrate holy mass in them. When he preached the concourse of catechumens and other pagans was amazing; there was no house capable of containing such a multitude, and he was therefore obliged to announce the divine message in the open air; they never appeared tired of hearing it, his catechist had to take his place when fatigue prevented his continuing to speak. All this he has related to me himself, and he is very anxious to return to this country to instruct and strengthen so docile a people.

A singular story is attached to this priest; although the circumstances may be only the effect of a heated imagination, it may yet be a subject for edification to the faithful, and is at least a sign of the progress of religion in these countries. In the year 1860 this priest, in company with other Christians, was imprisoned as the propagator of a false religion, and subjected to divers tortures that he might be forced to apostatise; it was not till after the conclusion of the treaty that he was set at liberty. He had of course been despoiled of everything in his possession, and amongst these of a copper crucifix a few inches long. This crucifix was taken away by the son of the prefect who had imprisoned the missionary, and no one cared to find out how it had been lost. A few days ago, this young man came to our residence asking urgently for the missionary Tchang, as the good priest is called. He chanced to be with me, and on speaking with the young man he learned that he had been in search of him for more than a month, in order to make restitution, and at the same time presenting him with the crucifix of which we have spoken. When we asked him what induced him to return this crucifix, he owned with blushes that he had taken it when the missionary was arrested by his father, and that having put it at the bottom of the chest containing his clothes, he entirely forgot it; that during the month of June being one night only half asleep, a man appeared to him, majestic in appearance, and in colour like gold, and saying in an imperative tone, "I desire to return to the place whence I came," immediately disappeared. In October he had exactly the same apparition, but paid no more attention to it than to the former one, fancying it perhaps a dream; but at last, in December, the apparition was repeated, reproaching him and enjoining him to make haste and

obey, for he would not remain with him any longer. Having regained his courage the young man asked who he was and whither he desired to go, but the apparition made no further reply than to extend his arms in the form of a cross, and then disappeared leaving him in great alarm. More agitated than on the two former occasions, the young man went to his father to ask his advice as to what he should do. The father advised some superstitious acts in honour of their idols, in order that they might make known the will of heaven, and at the same time to search the house to find out whether some idol, taken from a pagoda might not be hidden in it, and if so, immediately to restore it. The young man followed his father's advice, and to his great surprise, found the crucifix, which he had entirely forgotten, concealed at the bottom of his chest. He was fully convinced that this was the majestic person who had appeared to him three times, and he at once set out for the place where Father Tcheng had been arrested five years before, though it was several days' march distant. There he found another missionary, to whom he was afraid to disclose the matter, but he obtained from him the intelligence he required, and learning that Father Tcheng lived with me, he came here to make the restitution to which he felt himself obliged. These circumstances have been verbally related to me as I have stated; I dare give no judgment as to their truth, but they are very remarkable. I could have wished in confirmation, that the young man had been converted, but though at the time he appeared to be convinced of the truths of Christianity, he has no firm determination to break the ties which attach him to paganism.

As to our little ones, I have nothing new to relate. I can only assure you that the elder ones fully appreciate the inestimable benefit which has been bestowed upon them, and are duly grateful to their benefactors. We have a little blind child, eight years old, who is very intelligent, and of whom I hope to speak to you on some other occasion, after we shall have given him holy baptism. I shall give him one of the names which you recommend. Most of them have already been given, and I believe that the greater number of these children are in heaven. In baptising this little blind boy, so remarkable for his devotion and capacity, I shall take one of these names by chance, and shall recommend him when I give it to pray daily for his little brother and benefactor in Europe.

Accept the sentiments of profound esteem and gratitude with which I have the honour to be,

Your devoted and obedient servant,

Francis Eustace Zanoli, Bp. of Eleutheropolis,
Vic. apost. of Hou-pe.

SOUTHERN TONKIN.

Letter from the Rev. Fr. Berlier, Miss. Apost. to the Director of
the Holy Childhood.

Southern Tonkin, 5th Jan. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

It is high time that you should hear something of the mission of Southern Tonquin, in which, in common with all the associates of the Holy Childhood, you have taken so kind an interest during the long trials to which we have been subjected. I shall not attempt to relate all that we have endured; for this volumes would be required, and after all I should only reproduce details similar to those you have already received from all the missions of the Annamite kingdom. I will only say that our mission is one of those which has had the most to endure; twenty-one of our priests were arrested, and of that number fifteen were beheaded; four have died in prison from want, and only two were liberated at the conclusion of the treaty of peace. As to the other priests they have had all kinds of hardships to endure in order to escape the search of the satellites. One of these, whom I met lately, told me laughingly of some of his adventures which are a specimen of the rest. Concealed on the top of a hill, a certain quantity of rice was brought to him in leaves, as opportunity offered, but at the end of a day or two it became bad, and the stench of it unbearable. On one occasion he had to pass several days without receiving anything at all. Suffering from hunger, tormented by thirst, and hardly able to walk, he dragged himself during the night to the foot of the hill, and there having fortunately found some water he began to drink. At first he thought it excellent, but as he continued to quench his thirst he found it tainted with the smell of dung, and to his horror discovered that it was a lake which buffaloes were accustomed to frequent.

I know by my own experience the hardships of such a life. Obligated to fly to the hills, and not daring to light a fire lest the smoke should betray me, I have remained for whole days crouching under a carpet of leaves, which served as a cover from the torrents of rain. At night I climbed to a kind of cage erected at about fifteen feet from the ground, that I might escape from the tigers, elephants, rhinoceroses, and other animals of this kind which abound in these hills. It was soon however necessary to seek some other

retreat, for one of the spies had observed me. Two of our priests who were equally fugitives with myself, made me come with them to a kind of hut, hastily constructed with branches of trees, and there we were able to remain together for about a fortnight, at the end of which time, the Christian who was accustomed to bring our rice entreated me to escape as soon as I could, for that the threats of another Christian had filled him with terror. I then went to another hill where I made a hut, and was fortunate enough to remain there two months without being discovered.

I will own, Rev. Sir, that whilst there I feared an encounter with a human being quite as much as with one of the gentle animals of which I have spoken above. But I was soon discovered by those in search of me, and I was obliged to seek shelter elsewhere. I was then able to remain in another hut for about a fortnight, but the post was by no means secure, for the alarm had been given, and this was exactly the season when these hills are subject to all kinds of insects. I did not know which way to turn, when our dear Lord came in a visible manner to my help. The daughter of one of our good Christians came one day to tell me that her father had prepared a hiding place for me in his house, and that the sooner I went to it, the better. When I got thither, I learned that seven or eight people from that very village were going in search of me to the very place which I had just quitted. They had a flask which it was their intention to present politely to me, begging me to imitate Socrates and sacrifice myself for the public repose; if I refused they were to force open my mouth and to conceal my dead body in some corner amongst the hills.

You may judge from this how little we have been able to do for the Holy Childhood. Without home, without communication with our poor Christians, who were then groaning in crowded, miry, infected prisons, surrounded by combustible materials ready to be stifled or consumed at the first signal, the work was at a stand still. In the greater part of our Mission the Christian villages were razed to the ground, and all property was a prey to the first occupant, rewards were even given to such pagan villages as should put the greatest number of Christians to death: Yet in spite of the severe orders which foiled all pity for them, many villages ran the risk of succouring their Christians or at least of allowing them to beg or even labour for the support of their sad existence. But there were other villages which took pleasure in tormenting them. Their feet in fetters, their necks in the cangue, these poor Christians could not walk a step either by day or by night. In addition to all this was sometimes added, by the cruelty of some of these wretches, a long bamboo upon the chest, which prevented

them even from moving. Nearly a third part of them died in prison, and the dead bodies were not permitted to be removed from the prisons till they were in a state of complete decomposition.

But enough of this sad subject. Thanks be to God, our position is now much improved. We are still far from the enjoyment of perfect liberty, and Bishop Gauthier, who returned to his Mission as soon as it was possible, is still subjected to annoyances without number. His lordship has just repurchased a fine piece of ground which had been stolen from us like everything else, and has charged me to form on it an establishment for the Holy Childhood. A house has been already bought, and I am going to have it removed to this situation, which is admirable for such a purpose. As you may suppose, everything has to be begun again. I can do nothing better than recommend this rising work to your charity, and that of your beloved associates. May Jesus in His infinite mercy grant us protection, growth and good end, and Mary help us by her prayers.

Accept, Rev. Sir, the offering of my most profound respect,
Berlier, Miss Apost.

FRENCH INDIA.

From Sister Mary Angela Guy, a Nun, at Karical, to the
Director of the Society.

Karical, 2nd April, 1865.

Rev. Sir,

After twenty months' absence I have now returned to my Mission which is to me as a second family. I look with lively pleasure at my children, that part of my work which is so dear to my heart and which has been for many years the great object of my solicitude, and to which I shall be happy to consecrate the small remains of health and strength which it has pleased God to restore to me after several years of illness. I have been received by our dear children and the good people of Karical with demonstrations of affection and interest which I am very far from meriting.

Good continues to be done in spite of the obstacles of different kinds, which the enemy of souls seeks to raise up. I need not speak to you of the prudent and enlightened zeal of our good Missionaries, and of their devotion to their work, for these you have long known. As to their superior, his energy and devotedness are above all praise. No difficulty deters him when there is a

question of the regeneration of this poor people; his success in this work is truly wonderful.

A few years ago the pagans would not have thought of entrusting us with the education of their children. Now, thanks to his energy and kind assistance, they flock to our schools in greater number than Christians. 132 little pagans are now attending the schools of our establishment.

The children brought up here from the funds of the Holy Childhood, are forty-one in number, seventeen of whom are at nurse. We have had eleven baptisms since the 1st January, and of these two little angels have already fled to heaven, where they pray for the benefactors who have procured for them a happiness which will never be taken away. We have just placed a little girl and two boys in Christian families, which saves expense to the Holy Childhood. Most of the pagans now feel the benefits of education. We may therefore hope that to many of them, the education and instruction received by their children, will not be without fruit. Many of these pagans have excellent hearts and good feelings. Ah! if the light of the Gospel were to break upon these souls which as yet know not Him Who can alone render them happy; I have no doubt we should in them see in a striking manner the power of His grace.

Our work has for some time past become more extensive, but it would increase much were the number of our Sisters greater and our establishment larger and better arranged. Our house is not large enough for the 305 pupils we have, and we require more space on account of the different castes, which you know, Rev. Sir, cannot be mixed. This state of things is injurious to the health. We have only a temporary chapel to which purpose we have been obliged to devote several rooms which we can very ill spare. We should require at least £150 for building a chapel.

For all our wants and exigencies, we have only six Sisters; we require at least two more. We are obliged to take a certain number of under mistresses from amongst our older pupils, and as these young people acquit themselves with great zeal and devotion, I should be very glad to give them an occasional recompense, did the resources of the house allow it. But the establishment is so poor and there is so much suffering to be relieved, that it is difficult, not to say impossible, for me to gratify my wishes upon this point. If a nun who has made a vow of poverty were permitted to desire anything, I should wish for a fortune which would enable me to ameliorate the sad fate of so many unhappy creatures. Oh Rev. Sir, if you only saw the misery by which we are surrounded as I do, your heart would be deeply touched. Unhappily the country

has so few resources that it is very difficult to give any aid to these poor creatures. The class of Parias are the greatest sufferers. It sometimes happens that our little day scholars of this caste grow pale during their studies and fall upon their books; when we inquire what is the matter, why they do not study, they answer in a scarcely audible voice: "I am so weak and ill; I have eaten nothing since yesterday," or, "the day before yesterday."

One of these little Parias five or six years old has lately been baptised. There is another twelve or thirteen years old who is very pleasing and who has been for nearly four years earnestly begging to be admitted to holy Baptism, but whose parents, still pagans, persist in refusing her the favour which she has so long solicited in vain. Her brother is a christian, and is master of the school for his caste. Let us hope and pray that the constancy of this dear child will in the end overcome the obstinate resistance of her unhappy parents. She is already of use to us in the school; she has the care of a division of eighteen pupils to whom she teaches Prayers, Catechism, and to read. We may hope that such devotedness will not go without its reward.

In a few days we are going to open a school in the Black town, nearly ten minutes distance from the community, and in a quarter which is quite pagan and full of heathen temples. Formerly the pagans would have regarded us suspiciously had they seen us walking through their streets, but now they think no evil. The house destined for the school of which I have spoken, was a sacred place to these poor pagans, for into this house, they say, their gods descended every year. I hope that they will not dare to descend into it when we are there.

There has been an evident movement towards Catholicism for some time past; of which what I have said above may be considered a proof. God frequently makes use of children to bring their parents to a knowledge of the truth. Several of the pagan mothers who have brought us their children, have some months later themselves come to beg for instruction in the truths of our holy religion, and to be admitted to receive holy Baptism. With some exceptions they love their children, and are in general only induced to get rid of them by the pressing want to which they are reduced. In spite of all the obstacles raised up by the enemy of souls, it often happens that the pagans themselves, though they hardly know how, are the instruments in God's hands for the salvation of their brethren. The following anecdotes will prove the truth of this remark.

One day a pagan woman came to us carrying a child some weeks

old in her arms, and led by one of the little pagans who attend our school. The child who was about eight years old, was radiant with delight. We asked her who the woman was, and what she wanted. "I found this woman in the street," was her joyful reply; "and she was trying to destroy her child; so I told her that if she wished to get rid of the baby she had better come with me, and that I would take her to the Sisters, who received young children, and I was sure would receive hers." The mother followed this good advice, and we took her child, so this dear little thing unknown to herself, was the means of snatching a soul from the devil. May the Divine Infant grant her a similar favour in return. Pagans generally like to trust their children to us, because they know that they will be well taken care of. About two months ago, a pagan mother had sold her child to a musulman; when she found out that we were accustomed to receive children, she took it away for the price she had received for it, and brought it to us. It sometimes happens that the mothers of our little pagans when they find their children more docile, and more respectful towards themselves than they formerly were, bring us as a proof of their gratitude, other pagan mothers who wish to get rid of their children and who are ready to give them to us. This could not have happened a few years ago. Some of our Christians are very zealous and devoted to the Holy Childhood, and amongst these are Jambousami, the chanter of the parish, and Guanaprégasseim Paulli, president of the confraternity of Mount Carmel. If the former learn that a child has been sold to a musulman, or a pagan, or to the bagadires which is still worse, he immediately takes steps for withdrawing it from such diabolical hands, and has it brought to us. May the Lord pour upon him and his family a recompense of abundant benediction.

We began, some months ago, a native noviciate. The young women whom we shall train to the religious life, will later become our helpers in the work which it has pleased Divine Providence to confide to us. We have three novices and two postulants; two of them are children who have been brought up by the Holy Childhood, they are excellent girls and give good hope for the future. I think you will observe with pleasure, Rev. Sir, that the sacrifices of our dear little associates of the Holy Childhood are not thrown away, since two of our children have already learned to understand the benefits of a religious vocation, and how glorious it is to be consecrated to the service of God and devoted to the salvation of souls.

This is a grain of mustard-seed which will we hope spread and become at last a large tree, producing its fruits in the Church of

God. Let us pray that thus it may be so. May the example of these first novices be followed by many others if for the glory of God. There is much to be done, and the labourers are few. All that we have hitherto done is but little in comparison with what remains to be done. There is a large field to be cleared which abounds in briars and thorns. Let us redouble our prayers in order that God may be moved to cast a look of pity on these poor people, and dissipate the darkness which prevents their seeing the truth. Before I terminate this long letter, let me claim from your paternal charity, a remembrance in your prayers and holy sacrifices of my little family and myself.

Accept, Rev. Sir, the assurance of my profound respect and lively gratitude,

Sister Mary Angela Guy.



AFRICA—MADAGASCAR.

From the Rev. Father Callet, Jesuit Missionary, to the Director of the Holy Childhood.

Rev. Sir,

The children of our schools at Tananariva are very promising, and we look forward to their becoming an honour to religion. I shall give you some of the particulars of a public examination which was held lately, and which formed a brilliant termination to the studies of the year.

Thursday the 16th of February was the day fixed for this public exhibition of some of their acquirements. It was a great event for them, and indeed for the whole capital, which had never witnessed anything of the kind before. Though they had been preparing for a month, they were only informed of the time fixed three days beforehand, and the news caused general conversation. Cries were heard of "We have never done that. We shall do it badly. We dare not. We shall make mistakes before our parents," &c, and the elders were thinking of staying away that they might spare themselves and their parents this humiliation. The professor, Father Abinal, an experienced man, had also his objections—"You do not know what you are talking about.—Do not you think I know you? I know what you are able to do. You are able to succeed and you will succeed; so be silent and let no one be afraid." As he spoke, the clouds of misplaced timidity and excessive fear which had begun to gather over these young minds, dispersed as by

enchantment. Letters of invitation were sent to the relations, which had been another cause of alarm. As the young prince Ratahiry, the adopted son of the queen, and other members of her family, the sons of the prime minister, several of their cousins, and a good number of the children of the first nobility were in our upper school, a kind of reflected fear got possession of all the assistants. The alarm of her majesty, queen Rasoheryna, infected all the others, she trembled for her dear Ratahiry; these wise heads thought to themselves—"Do the Fathers know what they are about? Are they not risking the honour of the royal family and the nobility?" Fortunately, the children, inspired with confidence by the cleverness of Father Abinal, were able, at least in some degree, to calm the fears of their relations. In reality we did not expect to have many people at our examination, for the grandees who had been invited replied evasively. "It is possible that I may be unable to avail myself of your kind invitation, for I have a *raharaha* which will probably prevent me." The word *raharaha* signifies some important occupation, or rather it signifies more frequently nothing at all, being merely a polite pretext for a refusal. The fact was, they were waiting to see which way the wind from the court would blow, and it did blow very soon by the mouth of the prime minister. The sense of his reply to the letter of invitation was as follows: "I am much pleased with your project, but I shall be prevented from coming to the meeting on the day you name. (The hindrance was real, as was known to all Tananariva on the following day, February 17th). I will however send my representative, and her majesty the queen, to whom I have spoken on the subject, approves your idea and will do the same. This reply which was well known before it reached its address, dispersed the *raharahas* of the other persons invited. The Madagascar officers are essentially prudent.

On Thursday morning, long before the hour fixed, our enclosure was invaded by a crowd of curious people, who pressed to the windows and doors of our church, now transformed into the hall of assembly. It had been magnificently decorated, and in the very centre of the decorations appeared the portrait of our Sovereign Pontiff like an eloquent sermon to the invited guests, who had not yet learned to call him Father. The impatience of the crowd was great, but they were not permitted to enter. Violence was almost necessary to keep them without the gates; it was useless to represent to them that Mr. Laborde the French Consul and Mr. Pakenham the English Consul had not yet arrived, and that we must also wait for the representatives of the queen and prime minister. Happily there were two blacksmiths of herculean strength as

guards at the entrance, and they were able to enforce a certain degree of respect.

At last the great personages arrived. The crowd rushed in. Every space was filled in a moment. We had taken care to bring in the great nobility and the parents of our children through the Sacristy, for our church is too small to contain all those who desired to come in and see. The windows were filled with eyes which looked on from without. Before seating ourselves, the representative of her majesty requested to speak in the name of his sovereign, announcing to the Fathers that he was the bearer of the words of the queen. He expressed himself as follows: "These are the words of Queen Rasoharina; *Go, princes of my family, go, great officers of my crown, go, judges of my people, go, all my people and be present at this meeting of knowledge. Go amongst the Whites, for they are my friends, and they teach us wisdom and knowledge.*" And he added, "I am sent by my sovereign to represent her in this assembly, since she cannot be amongst you herself, and I come to encourage the efforts of youth in her name."

Having spoken thus he sat down in the highest place, which, as representative of the queen was his right. Mr. Laborde the French Consul was on his right hand, Mr. Pakenham the English Consul on his left. Father Abinal then ascended to the gallery prepared for the children, and in a few well-spoken words explained the motives for the assembly, and the particular subjects upon which the children were to be questioned. Then business began.

1. It commenced with a reference to the ancient history of Madagascar. Father Abinal asked the children ranged around him on the gallery (the questions were asked in French, answered in Malgache) *What is a vacation?* Welcome rest after fatigue. *Why is a vacation given now?* To keep the *fandroana* (the great new year's feast.) *What is done during the fandroana?* People pay visits, give presents, bathe, wash, kill a great many oxen, every one partakes of them and all are merry. *Do you know which of your kings instituted the fandroana?* No, no one ever told us. *Very well, I will tell you.* He then related the origin of the *fandroana* and the appearance of oxen at this feast, in French, whilst Prince Ratahiry and his rivals translated the words as they fell from his mouth, for the benefit of the Malgache hearers. This clever way of opening the meeting was very interesting to the assembly. The Malgaches were rather surprised to find that a white man but lately arrived, knew better than themselves the origin of a custom which was almost lost in the night of ages. Our children got

through this first trial perfectly well, and it made a good impression on the assembly.

2. As an amusement between the acts, Prince Ratahiry placed himself at the Harmonium, and played some airs which gave no less pleasure than his translation of the history of the fandroana. Prince Rasoarandranana, his cousin, succeeded him, and excited general admiration by his no less distinguished touch. They are competitors in everything, and about the same age: eight or nine years old.

3. After this came geographical exercises upon the countries and capitals of the five parts of the world. These exercises were the more surprising to the Malgaches that these were in French. If a pupil made any mistake in his topography his rival corrected him, and the murmurs of approbation with which the latter was received kept the vanquished on his guard, and told him plainly to be more exact next time.

4. Then there was the repetition of French verbs. In this Prince Ratahiry distinguished himself, both by his own performance and his readiness in taking up his competitor with the truly French vivacity which characterises him. The former had omitted by mistake to add to the third person of the imperfect of the verb *love*, or *she* loved, and had only said, *he loved*. Ratahiry seized upon the fault: "You have left out the feminine; he or she loved," said he. At this bold reproof the whole company broke into a fit of laughter very flattering for the prince, and which was prolonged for several minutes. Until this moment the eldest of his attendants, his favourite nurse, who loved him more than herself, had kept her face concealed, thus revealing her apprehensions regarding the little offspring of royalty. These fears were shared by all the high nobility, but from this instant all fear was at an end, she showed her face openly and every sign of fear had vanished.

5. After this contest the two sons of the prime minister succeeded each other at the Harmonium, which responded readily to their agile fingers. On a sudden the countenance of the British Consul was illumined by a patriotic smile; his ears were saluted by the well known air "*Mallrook s'en va-t-en guerre.*" It is needless to say that the same smile was seen upon every European face.

6. Then came the time for reading and translating. Some French was read with a translation into Malgache, and Malgache with a translation into French. The semi-parisian pronunciation of the prince and some others was remarked. This double reading and its double translation kept up the attention of the assembly

very well, which flat and monotonous reading would not have done.

7. The meeting ended with questions in the four first rules of arithmetic. In the middle of a sum done by the Princes Ratahiry and Rasoarandrana, a Malgache professor called out that he wished to ask some questions on the world. He was told that the time for that had passed, but that he might, if he liked, ask some questions in arithmetic presently. The princes having finished their sums, Father Abinal brought forward two competitors, brothers, who appeared full of fire, and to whom the professor dictated a sum in division, with a fraction, in Malgache. "Speak French," said the youngest of the brothers, "because we have learned to work our sums after the manner of the whites, and in French." The professor replied rather warmly, that he did not know French, but he did English, and that he would ask his questions in English. "We are French, then," said the eldest boy, "and we do not know English. Rather piqued by this answer, the old professor was about to reply, but his words were lost in a murmur of disapprobation. On this Mr. Pakenham, the English consul, who speaks French very well, took up the matter, and gave a sum in division, without any fraction or even remainder. This delicate and pacific intervention was admired by the whole assembly.

In conclusion, Father Abinal again mounted the gallery, and publicly thanked the representatives of the queen and prime minister, the French and English consuls, the great offices, the nobles, the children's relatives, and the whole assembly, for having come to encourage by their presence the endeavours of our children. The meeting then closed, and every one went away highly delighted.

The distribution of rewards could not take place in public, for the sitting had already been long, and our prizes so poor that we were a little ashamed of them. We gave them immediately afterwards, in the schoolroom, in the presence of the children only. The rewards are given according to assiduity and good marks, and however little value they may have in themselves, they are much thought of by our children, who are proud to take home to their parents proofs of industry and the approval of masters. Our little Malgaches have a good deal of the spirit of emulation. They are very ambitious to have their name at the head of the list for good marks, which entitles them to the first choice of a reward. Father Abinal was there with his list, and called out the names with the number of good marks; the pupil named then came to the table to choose one of the articles we call prizes, which were spread out upon it. We observed with pleasure that the more

advanced in French chose volumes of Schmidt, with illustrations. They are pleased with books with pictures.

But this is enough for the subject, and yet I should not complete it, Rev. Sir, if I did not tell you of some of the good results of this grand meeting.

We know that the French and English consuls, who are good judges, have shown their full and entire satisfaction. The public has pronounced later. It repeats loudly of Prince Ratahiry: "He is very clever, very learned, he has no equal." We have not heard whether the queen has made any remark, but we know that the grandees have echoed the public voice around her. Her majesty has been much gratified by the unanimous testimony which has been so flattering to the heir of the throne. She gave two hundred piastres to the young prince as a reward for the knowledge which he had acquired, and which he displayed so brilliantly before the public on the occasion of last Thursday's meeting.

The public testimony of all ranks, is not, however, what we had in view by this public conversation. Our desire was to make known our children to themselves, for their own satisfaction and that of their parents. The new and gentle emotions which were awakened in their own hearts and those of their parents, after a trial which had at first alarmed their inexperience, but which was followed by a complete triumph, fully repaid their exertions. They were pleased that they had believed Father Abinal and taken this first step. In future they will dare to do what they are capable of.

This public exhibition has shown that they have a degree of capacity which was no doubt born with them, but which a good education has rendered fertile, by preventing the corruption of the heart from enervating the power of the mind, or obscuring its light. There are some excellent stocks among the nobility, and aptness of mind is hereditary in many high families. It would be a pity to let these gifts be hidden or wasted away.

The joy of these children was doubled by that which was afforded their parents. They have really very good hearts, and the happiness of their parents is, as it were, their own. The same may be said of the parents who here, as elsewhere, triumph in their children. It would be difficult to decide which is most happy, the child who gathers laurels in the presence of the assembly who adjudges them, or the parent who is present and can say, "He is my son." Who can say, for example, which feels the largest amount of pleasure, the young Prince Ratahiry, or her Majesty Rasoharina, when she hears the public voice saying of him, "Prince Ratahiry is too clever; he has no equal."

What was still more, however, to these dear children, is that

they doubly rejoice in their success, because they feel that it raises their masters as well as our holy religion, in the public opinion. This gives their pleasure an elevation which, including God's representatives, raises it nearer to Himself.

Having spoken of the pupils and their success, allow me to say a word about the master who prepared them. I have already several times named Father Abinal, director of the studies and professor of the upper school; Father Roblet has the care of the little ones.

Father Abinal has supreme control over them all, because he knows equally well how to make himself always loved and feared when it is necessary. Besides this, he captivates children by the ease with which he speaks pure Malgache. He has already decyphered all the manuscripts of the ancient history of the Malgaches. This study gave him the knowledge of their manners and customs; which astonished these people and made them say, "He knows our history and our affairs better than we do ourselves." Besides this knowledge of their history, out of compassion for the many poor creatures who have no means of obtaining the help of a doctor, he has become a dentist, and extracts teeth with the greatest success. Not that he ever studied under any dentist. He merely inherited the case of instruments of Father Webber, who died amidst general sorrow on the 2nd of August, last year. It appears as if the knowledge of the deceased had been enclosed in it, or rather it was that charity was added to a natural dexterity in such matters. These good people take every opportunity to show their gratitude.

At present, masters and pupils, fathers and children, all are enjoying the vacation. Father Abinal will take advantage of the respite to make an apostolic excursion into the province of Belsileos; and I am to be his companion.

Our children are in the bosom of their families, taking the rest they need, after the fatigues of the year, and to keep the *fandroana* or feast of the new year, which comes rather later than ours. The history of this *fandroana* would have some interest, but I must stop, my letter is perhaps already too long.

Our pupils come to see us from time to time, and bring us new pupils who desire to be received into our schools. The holidays will last for a fortnight. Their first duty on their return will certainly be to give their monthly alms for the valuable and holy Society of the Holy Childhood. They are much pleased with this work, and perfectly understand both the idea and its practice, so dear to the Infant Jesus.

Accept, Rev. Sir, the respectful homage of your devoted servant,
Father Callet, S. J.

POLYNESIA.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Louis Maigret, Vic. apost. of the Sandwich Islands, to the young associates of the Holy Childhood.

Honolulu, 4th November, 1864.

Dear little associates of the Holy Childhood:

I have just learnt that you have received the letter which I wrote to you last year. Well! here is another, and if God spares my life I hope that it will not be the last which I shall write to you.

I must tell you then that I have again made a little journey, and in its course I have seen many things. In the first place I have seen a ship on fire, and was on board it with two of our missionaries whom I was taking to their post, and perhaps a hundred other passengers. We were very near being burned alive or swallowed up by the sea, but thank God, the fire was got under and we escaped with only the alarm.

Then I have seen a woman thirty or thirty-five years old, whose arms ended at the elbow and her legs at the knees, and she has been thus from her birth. Yet this woman works, prepares her food, plaits mats and makes her clothes herself. You will hardly believe this, but it is quite true. She is a Christian and her name is Elizabeth; she is married and has charming children. We found her sitting on the ground under a tree before her house, and surrounded by her little family, consisting of an infant, two children still very young, and a girl of twelve, very pleasing and intelligent, docile, and full of respect and attention for her mother. As the husband, who is also a Christian, was at work in the fields we did not see him. We remained a short time with the poor creature deformed by nature. She seemed perfectly submissive to the will of God. She looks as if of a strong constitution, and is by no means unpleasing; she is lively in conversation, and I assure you she can talk as well as others can. The only thing which made me sad was the thought that she had neither arms nor legs. "But," you will say, "if she has no arms how does she manage to eat? If she has no feet how does she contrive to walk?" To the first question it is sufficient to say, that a person who can make a dress can have little difficulty in conveying her food to her mouth; to the second, dear children, be content to know that she does not walk as those do who have feet, but that she drags herself along. I am sure that if you had been with us when this poor thing left

the tree under which she had been sitting, to go to confession in the house, you would not have been able to repress tears of pity for her. I own that I felt quite faint. There was a comforting thought however to counterbalance my sorrow; and that was the knowledge that this poor woman has, like ourselves, a soul made after the image of God, that our Lord Jesus Christ died for her as for us, that as a Christian she will equally have a share in the heavenly inheritance, that she will be exalted and comforted in heaven in proportion with her affliction and humiliation upon earth, and that at the last day her body will have a glorious resurrection. I recommend her and her family to your prayers.

A third thing I have seen—the image of hell. I am speaking of a volcano, which in the language of the country is called Kilanea. It is an immense gulf of fire at least three miles in circumference. It has burned from time immemorial, and no one knows when it will go out. It has been for centuries devouring the entrails of the earth. It has hollowed immense catacombs, and is incessantly at work to form new ones. Its fury is always the same, and it sometimes causes such commotions in the depths of the abyss, that the highest mountains tremble and the whole island is shaken. Above the furnace there is a column of fire which rises towards heaven, and for some miles all around there are innumerable crevices which are like chimneys pouring forth smoke. The contents of this boiling volcano appear black like pitch during the day, but at night like the fire of a forge, or of an immense furnace of charcoal. It is a place for meditation on the torments of the damned. You may say to yourself, this gulf which seems so frightful is nothing compared with the abyss of hell, into which the wicked will be thrown. Ah: how mad are those who will not serve God. What folly to expose themselves to burn during eternity in a fire which will never be quenched. And you dear children who are now so pleasing and so good, never suffer yourselves to be led away by bad example. Love God and serve Him all your life; by loving Him you will gain heaven and avoid the fire of hell.

I could tell you of a good many other things which I saw on my journey, but I should make my letter too long, and should tire you perhaps. It is enough that I tell you that I have blessed another church, baptized about 100 children, given confirmation in 14 different stations, and seen a great many little ones, children of pagans, who stand much in need of your assistance.

May God bless you!

Your old friend from the Sandwich Islands,
Louis, Bishop of Arathia, Vicar Apost. of the Sandwich Islands.

ANNALS
OF THE
Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 70.—MARCH, 1866.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE—CHINA.

From the Rev. P. D'Addosio, Lazarist Missionary at Pekin,
to the Superior of the Seminary at Sens.

Pekin, May 2nd, 1865.

Dear and venerated Father,

The grace of our Lord be always with us!

With a heart still full of emotion, I take up my pen to write a few lines, and reply to your kind letter of the 24th of January.

The consecration of the Right Rev. Dr. Guierry took place on Sunday last, the Feast of the Translation, in the Cathedral of Pekin. You may imagine the sentiments with which my soul was filled during this sublime ceremony, of which I was the chief director.

The circumstances of place and persons contributed not a little to increase this emotion. Is it not wonderful that this great and solemn ceremony, should thus have been accomplished in a town where paganism prevails, and in the midst of a people given up to the superstitions and vain practices of the heathen?

The splendour of the solemnity was further increased by the presence of three Bishops who assisted the Consecrator, Bishop Mouly, and Dr. Guierry the newly elected prelate. I must not omit to remark that this is probably the first time in China that the Consecration of a Bishop has been completed according to the canonical rules, that is, by three assistant Bishops. Various difficulties having till now, rendered the observation of this rule of discipline, impossible.

The Bishops were the Right Rev. Dr. Verrolles, Vic. Apost. of Marchouria, who is here upon business, the Right Rev. Dr. du Bac,

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S.J., Vic. Apost. of Western Tchely, and the Right Rev. Dr. Anouilh, our colleague, who resigned his place of assistant to Bishop Verrolles as Senior. The two legations of France and Spain, all the Catholic Europeans residing in Pekin, and a considerable number of Chinese, both Christians and pagans, filled the nave and aisles of our magnificent Cathedral, and gave a solemnity to this ceremony which reminded me of the most splendid ones in Europe. But I must tell you of another ceremony as interesting perhaps and more important, which took place the day after the Consecration, that is the 1st of May.

This was the laying of the first stone of the new church of our French Mission. The old church of the residence at Pethang, having been destroyed after the departure of the Missionaries at the beginning of this century, we are obliged to have all our offices on feast days, at the Cathedral, which is full a mile from our house. Ever since his return from France, Bishop Mouly has had the intention of building a new church; but the restoration of the Cathedral, of two cemeteries, French and Italian, the destruction of our house by fire last year, and other more necessary expenses have postponed the execution of this intention till the present time. At last, our house being rebuilt, and our seminary raised from its ruins, the time came for thinking of the church. Our wish was to erect a temple not unworthy of the majesty of the Lord of heaven. A plan, sent from France, has been chosen, and the building will be immediately commenced.

The foundation was blessed and the first stone was laid yesterday, the feast of the holy Apostles SS. Philip and James. The ceremony was a grand one, in spite of the endeavours of the evil one to prevent it.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, all the European legations residing at Pekin, consisting of about forty persons, assembled upon a gallery covered with mats, and what is more remarkable, three grand Mandarins with red buttons (the highest dignity) all first ministers of the kingdom, were willing to take a part in the ceremony, to which we had invited them. Bishop Mouly, assisted by his clergy performed the ceremony. The three Bishops I have named before were in the gallery with the ambassadors and mandarins. An immense crowd, anxious to be present at so extraordinary a ceremony, had assembled and choked up all the avenues to our residence. A number of precious things were enclosed in the stone; medals of the Blessed Virgin, St. Vincent and St. Francis Xavier; stones from Palestine; dust from the tombs of Loretto and of St. Peter in Montorio; gold coins bearing the effigy of the Emperor Napoleon III, (to whose munificence we

owe our church:) copper coins struck under the present Emperor of China, Foung-Dje ; a magnificent silver medal with the image of the Sovereign Pontiff, given by his holiness to Bishop Mouly ; and lastly, the title deeds relating to the erection, written upon parchment in three languages, Latin, French, and Chinese, and signed by the Bishops and Clergy, the diplomatic body and the most considerable amongst our Chinese Christians. The three grand Mandarins signed as well as the others. All was placed in a leaden box and enclosed in the blessed stone, which was then placed in the foundations in the centre of the tower of the church.

The ceremony which is customary in some places of the stone being mortared by all the laity present then followed. This was the most beautiful and impressive part of the whole ceremony. The Chinese Mandarins graciously accepted the invitation given them by his excellency the French minister, and were the first to descend from the gallery and cement the stone which attests the progress made by the Christian religion in this capital. They were succeeded by all the Europeans.

So it was that a gathering from all the principal nations of the world and all known people, French, English, Americans, Spaniards, Russians, Italians and Chinese, Catholics, Protestants, schismatics and pagans, were seen lending a hand, and labouring as it were, for the glory of God and of His Christ.

But the devil, who certainly could not be gratified by this concord, and particularly at beholding his own servants working for his ruin and the elevation of the Christian religion, failed not to do all in his power to inconvenience us, and to remind us that the place was his, and that he was not pleased at its being taken from him. A frightful storm broke out almost suddenly at the commencement of the ceremony ; the weather which had been very fine during the morning as it usually is at Pekin, became disturbed about half-past one o'clock ; but nothing announced so terrible a tempest. Bishop Mouly had not yet begun the first exorcism with holy water, when a tremendous gust of wind raised a whirlwind of dust and threatened to destroy the tents and all the preparations for the ceremony ; but the strength of Christian prayer had efficacy to control the infernal powers, and to force them to respect the sign of salvation placed in the midst of the foundations.

During the whole duration of the ceremony the weather could hardly be called splendid, but it was very fair ; the wind subsided as if by magic, and with the exception of a few occasional drops of rain and some gusts of wind, which broke over us like the roarings of the lion enchained by the name of Christ, nothing disturbed our imposing ceremony, which was conducted with perfect order.....

Our seminary at Peking is going on well ; the number of our young people exceeds 50.....

I recommend myself to your prayers, and am, in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Your very humble servant,

P. d'Addosio.

Extract from a Letter from Rev. Alph. Favier, Lazarist Missionary, to Mr. ———, a member of the Central Committee of the Society.

Peking, October 1, 1864.

One of our missionaries in the district of Suen-Hou-Fou, and now at the residence, has related what follows.

"The father of one of the servants of the residence, a very good Christian, of the town of Suen-Hou-Fou, as he was walking through some distant and deserted streets, found a poor little girl and boy, lying in a corner, upon the ground. They were without clothing, shivering with cold and almost dying. A dog, or some other animal, had eaten away one of the little boy's legs, and the little girl, frightfully bitten, was covered with black and livid spots. Perceiving it to be impossible to carry them away, the good man went in search of some water and baptised them. Almost immediately after he saw them yield their last breath, and two pure and innocent souls were fled to heaven.

"Being one day in the house, I heard some one enter my room; it was a little girl ten years old, who brought me, wrapped in a piece of cloth, a little pagan infant, whom she had just found on the road. This poor child was dying; I immediately baptised her, and she soon after expired. The good little Christian returned home full of joy, carrying carefully away a medal which I had given her as a reward for having been the means of saving a soul, in anticipation of a higher reward, which our Lord is preparing for her in heaven.

"A third incident occurred on the feast of the Assumption, 1864. While I was in the confessional, preparing certain Christians for holy Communion, who were about to receive it at holy mass, a man ran into the church carrying two children in his arms. He had found these poor little creatures on the road just setting out for Si-Wan-Tse. They were black with dirt, without clothing, and covered with a swarm of ants. Guided by faith, he had returned more than a mile out of his way, carrying his precious treasure; I

baptised them immediately, and they died in about an hour's time, going to heaven to be present at the triumph of the Queen of Angels."

Such are the occurrences which fill the heart of the missionary with joy, and amply repay him for the little inconveniences to which he is exposed. Similar things happened to me during my stay in Pekin, and if I were to get information from my brethren in the missions of the interior, I should soon have enough stories to fill a volume. Yes, unhappily there are still numbers of children exposed under the walls of our towns and in distant and deserted places, where they are found quite black, half eaten by dogs, and the subjects of dispute to myriads of flies, ants, and insects of all kinds. This is an every day story, and every missionary who returns to the residence attests these facts, of which he has often been an eye witness. The pagans sometimes kill their children before they expose them, fearing that some Christian should pass by and save them, for the Holy Childhood is known to all, at least in many places, and whether from fear or from superstition they employ this means to deprive it of what it holds most dear, the souls of these poor little ones. They often also blacken the children with soot and mud, for fear they should be recognised and brought back to them. The Christians carry them off either in a handkerchief, or a fold of their dress, or even in a large piece of paper, when nothing better is at hand. Oh, how grateful ought these poor children to be to the dear associates of the Holy Childhood, whose little alms open heaven to them. No doubt when there, these little angels cease not to pray for their benefactors, and to beg of God that those who have saved them may one day come and partake of their glory and happiness.

Alph. Favier.

From the Rev. Father Loriquet, Jesuit Missionary in China, to the Members of the Central Committee of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Chang-Hai, September 15, 1864.

Gentlemen,

It was about this time last year that I had to inform his lordship, the president, of the fresh loss which our mission and the Society of the Holy Childhood had sustained in the person of the Rev. Father Pingrenon. The reason why this duty devolved on me, was because I was his successor in the direction of one of the establishments, more especially under the patronage of your Society,

I mean the girls' orphanage in the Christian settlement of Tsang-Ka-Seu, near Chang-Hai. For the same reason I have now to render you an account of the year, to let you know in a short form what are the fruits of your alms, our hopes for the future, and what is needed for their realization; all matters which, no doubt, are particularly interesting both to yourselves and all the associates in the work.

Let us first cast a rapid glance over the former state of our little orphanage, which will enable us to judge more justly of the present condition of the establishment. The girls' orphanage was begun fifteen years ago under the administration of Bishop Maresca, who had a great devotion to the Holy Childhood. It was first established in the Christian settlement of Taong-Mong-Diao, in the district of southern Pou-Tong, with an administration formed of the most intelligent native Christians of the neighbourhood, the locality being a few rooms. These were so small, that in spite of the zeal of all parties concerned, and the chief superintendence of the bishop, the good done, though very real in a spiritual point of view, left much to be desired in the temporal way. This being the case, the superior authority was naturally desirous to bring nearer to the centre, an establishment to which for so many reasons it attached so high a value. A sad circumstance was the cause of its removal, during the administration of Bishop Borgniet.

Bands of brigands, known by the name of Tchang-Mao, had already ravaged several frontier provinces. A large part of ours had fallen into their power, and they approached very near to the territory of Chang-Hai. Of all its environs, Pou-Tong alone enjoyed a certain security, depending upon the presumed dispositions of the Europeans, as a guarantee from any incursions near enough to be dangerous. But this was not enough for the truly paternal solicitude of the chief pastor. He would not wait for the appearance of the wolf before he thought of putting his dear little lambs in safety. The mission possessed a house in the suburbs of Chang-Hai, near to the church, and the episcopal residence. He converted it into a refuge for the poor little ones. It was high time to move, for Pou-Tong was soon invaded, and Chang-Hai itself did not escape disturbance. The appearance of the little orphanage of Taong-Mong-Dao might have secured pity or forgetfulness, but not finding precious furniture, the fire of the invaders consumed a part of its unpretending buildings, and our children were fortunate in their escape from ignominy and the sword. The protection of Providence must have been specially extended to the little flock, or it could not have been preserved in the narrow asylum into which it was received. I hardly know how it was; but prudence forbade any

endeavour to quit this resting-place till the danger had entirely passed away; however small it might be, whatever inconvenience might be experienced, they were obliged to have patience, which they had. However great the desire to improve the condition of the dear children, they were obliged to be satisfied with what they had. When Bishop Borgniet left in 1862 for Pe-Tcheli, where the reward of his incessant labours was waiting for him, he left the orphanage to the especial care of the Rev. Father Pingrenon, who remained for some time as a resident in the same house.

I shall not attempt to describe this place. You may easily imagine how hundreds of sickly children were necessarily lodged, shut up in a small town house without court or garden, where prudence forbade the run of the streets, and without any water except that drawn from a pit. Every corner was filled, and space being wanting to increase the number of beds, there was no help but to give every compartment as many occupants as it could receive. To find places was a greater consideration than either health or cleanliness, and during the excessive heat of summer, the inconveniences of such a state of things were particularly felt. Our superiors watched incessantly for an opportunity of improving this state of things, and after some time an air of calmness and serenity was restored partially. Incendiary fires vanished with the brigands, and terror was succeeded by confidence. Our superiors then wished at once to carry into execution a project long determined upon in their minds, and that was to remove the orphanage again into the country, where purer air and a greater amount of exercise might restore life and enjoyment to the poor little ones. But the question was, where to fix, for, to the advantage of the country, must be added proximity, and facility for arrivals. The place must neither be too isolated nor too much exposed, to the sight of the pagans, and it must be protected by the vicinity of well intentioned persons who would be able to give efficient aid to the undertaking. Without mentioning every point, it was necessary that it should be in a populous parish, the management of which might supply the local missionary with frequent opportunities for exercising the consolations of his ministry, and exercising an active superintendence. Their thoughts turned towards Pou-Tong, which district united most of these advantages, as it contained three Christian settlements which had formerly served as episcopal residences or shelter to the little seminary. Out of these was chosen Tsang-Ka-Seu, the name of which has no doubt appeared more than once in our Annals. It will, henceforth, assume an important position. Containing about eight hundred Christians, this parish was for several years the place of the little seminary, and Bishop Spelta,

who was then coadjutor, and had the chief direction of it, resided there. It had, therefore, if not a right, at least a meritorious claim, and besides this, the seminary afterwards removed to Chang-Hai, had left a site more considerable than could be offered by any other parish. Our superiors were, therefore, determined upon Tsang-Ka-Seu.

Father Pingrenon was anxious to effect the removal as speedily as possible, and as the missionary of the place, I had the pleasure of affording some little help. I will tell you what was the condition of these poor children on their arrival. It was mid-winter, the beginning of the Chinese year. The cold was very severe, which gave an increased look of suffering to their sickly state. As fast as they arrived they took their places with their small supply of furniture. Our missionaries gradually gave up the building which had been left to them after the invasion. Precisely at the same time other children began to arrive by scores from Pou-Ne, one of the districts of the Mission which had suffered most from the Tchang Mao, so that in order to leave the whole place to them, we were obliged to emigrate in another direction, and the former seminary was transformed into an orphanage. It consists of a small house formerly built by Bishop Lavaissiere, two wings added in the time of Bishop Spelta; of another building in which the servants of the seminary used to live, and three detached rooms which served as a barn for straw. The Sacristy, being opposite to the parish church, became the chapel of the Orphanage. Other arrangements were made as well as was possible, and the children, who were too ill or too young to ascend a story, were placed in the old abode of the servants.

Here then were our little ones housed and lodged, and no doubt you think, comfortably. Yes gentlemen, we thank God for it; but think of 200 children sleeping, working, studying, eating and praying, in a space formerly occupied by 40 little scholars, and these even had not too much space. To give you an idea; the parish contains 800 souls; the church will hold 300 well packed, and you may therefore judge of the size of the Sacristy, now become the chapel of the Orphanage. The consequence is, that many of our children remain dispersed about during the time for religious exercises, which does not promote quiet and recollection. It is impossible either, to seat all these children at their meals, in a space which was formerly occupied by about 40. As to linen room, work shop, wash-house, dispensary, it is evident that nothing can be done about them. But we cannot spare them. We have other wants still more pressing, and amongst these one which it would be difficult for you to guess. The only superfluity which

the Tchang-Maos brought to this country, and to all those which they have ravaged, is the *itch*, excuse the word. Most of the children who arrived here were infected with it, and measures must be taken to cure them, and to prevent the contagion from spreading to the rest. It was therefore necessary to provide them with separate quarters, where they could enjoy the same advantages as the others, and yet not injure them. The only place was the magazine of straw. What was to become of the straw? It had to be brought outside, and left exposed to winds and weather. But we wanted the space. We made use of it, calling it more truly than politely the *Galerie*. (Itch-gale). Believe me, gentlemen, this was by no means the least important part of our establishment, for it often contained 50 children, nor the least interesting, for in these three little rooms, there was space for everything, for sleep as well as work, for food and study as well as for prayer. Everything in our gallery was complete, and all were similarly diseased, children and superintendents, school-mistresses and pupils.

It is often said, and no doubt with truth, that necessity is the mother of invention, and of this I will give you a proof. In the court of the former seminary, a covered passage was still remaining about eight feet wide. After having examined this narrow channel, I thought it might do us good service, and considering that a bed two feet in length is quite large enough for children who cannot yet walk, it followed that a range of such beds on each side would still leave a passage of four feet wide down the centre. I could therefore place 20 of our little orphans in this place. This was done. Our corridor was walled on each side, with windows for light and air, the little beds with their curtains were installed, and all was complete. Two superintendents were appointed in charge of this quarter, which was called that of the nursery, and was placed under the protection of the Holy Virgin and St. Joseph. This protection is very necessary from the accidents to which the place is liable. We had on one occasion a fire which might have had deplorable consequences, but happily there was no child in the end which caught fire, and we escaped with one bed burned and a fright. It was however a serious and profitable warning to our superintendents. I have then said, our little people were housed, better or worse. Since then, we have been able by degrees to form here and there some buildings for the principal and constituent parts of our establishment of this kind; for example: two schools, large enough for half of the children who are old enough to learn to read their prayers. A hall for the girls who make clothes, caps, shoes, flowers, &c. Another for working at cotton, carding, spinning, and weaving, and if you add to this the incessant trouble required to preserve

cleanliness in a place so small in proportion to the number of the inhabitants, you will have some idea of our Sen-Yu-Dany or house of the Holy Childhood.

The material being thus prepared, the next care was the personal, and I assure you that the numbering the children, separating one by one the elder and younger, and finding them places in the register, was by no means the business of one sitting. You will believe this the more readily of a house where everything is essentially feminine and Chinese.

One of the causes which made this work the more fatiguing and distasteful, was that many of these children had the identical names; the family name, the baptismal name, and even the age serving to increase the confusion which received little aid from the children themselves, who very often did not even know from whence they came. By dint of patience however we succeeded at last, and I may say with advantage, since several children who had *officially* disappeared, returned to the life they had *nominally* lost. Having done this, I recommenced the register for the year upon a plan which would, as far as possible, prevent the inconvenience which we had experienced, from recurring. I also recommended that the youngest children should have names given them which should be distinct from those of the others, and I also required attention to this in any further baptisms.

We now know all our little people and all goes on in good order; I will not invite you and your kind associates to come and see us with your own eyes—the voyage is rather too long, and indeed I should not dare to give such an invitation even to those who live very near, for our condition is too indifferent to be scanned by eyes accustomed, as those of Europeans always are, to the luxurious cleanliness, the perfect order and good understanding amongst all parties, which prevails in establishments of this kind in Europe. We are yet far from such perfection, and yet I was told that during my absence, some persons, whose experience of China enabled them to make greater allowance, had appeared well satisfied with the result we had obtained, and what is very singular in China, cleanliness was one of the things which they considered deserving of honourable mention. It seems little less remarkable that the children were thought to look well. This is the effect of the country air in reviving the little creatures, who came to Sen-Yu-Dany in a feeble and suffering state. In the town they almost all died; here they can live; in the town where they hardly ever saw the sun, these young plants blanched under the influence of a close and vitiated atmosphere—in the country they are revived by pure and free air.

I could also draw the attention of your readers to little scenes of detail, conduct them from one room to another, examine their little proteges, show them the elders teaching those who are advanced enough to read, elsewhere impromptu *mamas* rocking the little ones in the cradle. Or again our older girls of ten or twelve, drawing out cleverly their two or three threads at a time, and rivalling, I will not say a good European spinner, but in some sort the machines which have been lately invented. These, and similar things would not probably be wanting in interest, were it only that of curiosity.

But my letter is already too long. I hasten on to, in some senses, more important matters, of which you no doubt expect a report; I mean the account for the year. I only succeeded Father Pingrenon in September 1863, but the accounts begin with those of the rest of the Mission on the 1st of July. At that time there were pagan children in the Orphanage 87
In the course of the year have entered 301

The house of the Holy Childhood has then sheltered ... 388

This for the entrances. The outgoings have been:
Children great and small who have died with baptism ... 207
Placed in Christian families 37
Placed in the Orphanage of the Presentation 3
Have disappeared 3
Present at the end of June 138

388

I think these figures will be as clear to you as to myself, but they give occasion to some useful or even necessary observations.

You must remark, gentlemen, that these numbers relate simply to the interior and personal part of the Orphanage. Nothing is said of other good works carried on outside the house, though in the same district, and within the limits of the Holy Childhood. In the next place these figures are for the Orphanage of Tsang-Ka-Feu alone; they have nothing to do with the girls' and boys' orphanages near Zi-Ka-Wei, nor with those of Song-Kiang and Pau-Ne; nor with those of Tsang-Min and Kai-Meunsi, in short, with those of the other districts of Kiang Nan. Thirdly, if you refer to Fr. Pingrenon's account for the year preceding, you may observe that the entry was then much larger, which is a consequence of the country having been in much greater want. You may also observe that the mortality was much greater than this time.

There is another advantage at which I have hinted in the course of this letter: you will observe that thirty-seven children have been placed in Christian families, and to this fact I wish to call your especial attention. These are taken in a manner gratuitously, but this is not the whole of the good which has been done, for besides that the existence of the orphanage was the means for furnishing these good Christians with an opportunity of asking for some of our children, and thus relieving the establishment from the burden of their support, this good example has given rise in the hearts of others, to the desire to do a good work themselves, in seeking, saving, and bringing up at their own expense, without saying anything about it, the poor forsaken little ones, whom Providence may cast in their way. Our small number of 37 sent from the orphanage into Christian families has thus swelled into 109, and we have reason to thank God daily—both for the good within and that without. As for the 207 children who have died baptised, they are all now in heaven, and this is a real good which cannot fail to please your associates, for heaven is the term to which all are tending, clients and benefactors equally.

But there is another thing which is equally interesting as shewing the salutary influence of our establishment here, from another point of view.

It is some years since I began to speak of the Association of the Holy Childhood in this district, as I had formerly done at Tsang-Min, and a few generous hearts enrolled themselves under the banner of the Divine Child. The unfortunate arrival of the Tchang-Mao, bringing ruin and the sword, had, at least practically almost obliterated this from remembrance. But at the sight of the orphanage the recollection of the association returned, and not only so, but many other persons began to understand the value of the work. They saw and felt its utility; our poor orphans, great and small, became by their presence alone so many preachers of incomparable eloquence in favour of the new crusade. The consequence was, that in a short time a good number of persons wished to enrol their names, and left in our hands at the end of June last, a little sum of 78,345 sapecs, which is equivalent to about £16. It is only just to say that the amount came in great part from the pupils of the college of Zi-Ka-Wei already so honourably made known in your annals. Some of them members of families of Tsang-Ka-Lin, the parish of the orphanage, employed their new year's vacation in forming some new series of collectors. You see, gentlemen, that zeal is Chinese as well as French, and that by the grace of Him who implants, develops and fertilises it, it may everywhere flourish.

And now in what particular do we most require improvement? As you have seen from the commencement of this letter, it is in our locality. I cannot decide the question whether it would be best to remove, I am not now thinking of this. We must of necessity extend and enlarge in proportion to the extent of the good which presents itself for us to do. From the day when I first was charged with the direction of this establishment, I have never ceased to feel,—though I could see our poor little ones restored to life and resuming the tint belonging to their age,—that we should never do any real good in our present conditions. It is physically impossible, and our superiors know this as well as I do. But when we consider how everything is on their hands, when we think of what they did last year, and even this year, for the house of the Presentation and the new boys' Orphanage; what is to be said, what can be asked? Remember too it is very different at Tsan-Ka-Sen from what it is in the town; the new Orphanage is not confined within four walls, but contains a good piece of ground susceptible of all the enlargement and arrangements required. When through your renewed generosity, our superiors have been able to construct buildings spacious enough to afford a salubrious lodging for all your little protégées, when they have rooms which enable them to perform their religious duties with order and decency, to study or to apply themselves to the manual labours which are suitable to their age and ability, there will still be ample space for them to take their pastime and give the limbs which have been so long cramped and confined, the exercise which their development requires.

Then too, we shall be able to invite with confidence all friends to good works to come and see what the Holy Childhood does in this place. Too happy to have contributed to it according to my slender means, I now give up my place to one more able. The Rev. Fr. d'Argy, whose zeal and charity are already justly appreciated, will, I have no doubt, give to these small and imperfect beginnings a larger course and improvements corresponding to the generosity of his heart and the wisdom of his views, as well as with your legitimate desires. In this hope I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your grateful devoted servant,
J. Loriquet.

TONG KING.

From the Rt. Rev. Hilary Alcazar, Vic. apost. of Eastern Tong King, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.
(Translated from the Latin.)

Village of Ke-La, 30th Oct. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

"In my letter dated from Tun-Sou in 1862, I told you of the glorious triumphs of our venerable colleagues, and if I recollect rightly I spoke a little of the civil war. A short time after that I removed into our eastern province, where I found everything in the greatest confusion. The war had extended to all our Vicariates, and our neophytes delivered from captivity by the rebels, attached themselves either by choice or compulsion, to their party; and what is most to be regretted, some of the native priests, forgetting their duty and regardless of my advice, also took up arms. This deplorable circumstance brought immense misfortunes, for the mandarins were led by their conduct to conclude that the Christians were favourable to rebellion.....What ills have followed! I foresaw them before they broke out; but the tumult of spirit was so great, that no one listened to my advice, and the heads of the rebellion as well as many others were furious against me. But I had less fear from their fury than of the sad fall awaiting the Christians. The chief promoters of the rebellion were known to me, but they wanted everything necessary for the success of their great undertaking.....Our neophytes thinking themselves threatened with death, left their villages and all their possessions in order to fly, some to the mountains and some with the rebels towards the sea, though the greater part took refuge in the villages of the pagans. Many of the fugitives to the mountains perished from their privations in an unaccustomed kind of life; those who escaped to the rebel vessels found themselves unable to land when they wished to do so; those who had taken refuge with the pagans had less to suffer, but they were deprived of everything; all they had left at their homes having fallen into the hands of the rebels. Besides this, what I had most dreaded, took place on several occasions; the pagans after pillaging, set fire to the houses, and thus several of our christian settlements were destroyed."

The Missionary Bishop here relates, that being himself obliged to fly he directed his course with many Christians and native Priests, towards the sea in order to gain the shores of the Western

Vicariate, where he landed after having experienced a horrible tempest. There the poor exiles were received and succoured by Bishop Jeantet to the best of his power. After having accepted the hospitality of the venerable Prelate for his Vicar general and for his pupils in *the Latin language and theology*, Bishop Alcazar departed for his Vicariate towards the end of January 1863. Bishop Alcazar thus continues: "Relying on the help of God, I would not conceal myself; I refused to see no one, I acted openly, frequently sending circular letters to the Christians, calling back the Priests who had taken flight to the mountains or to La-Phu, and sending them forth to the different districts. The Christians flocked to me begging help both for body and soul; I passed days and nights in preaching and hearing confessions. I kept the festivals of the Church. I explained the truths of our holy faith as shown forth by the examples of the Saints, and above all in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the blessed Virgin Mary; lastly, I encouraged our Christians to patience. The tempest was indeed a frightful one,—but I was filled with joy in witnessing the faith of the neophytes and the patience with which they endured so many misfortunes. Thanks be to God, our deserted settlements begin to be repeopled.....But what penury! Even those who were rich before have very often recourse to me for help. I dry their tears by my christian exhortations, and I in some degree lessen their sufferings by my alms,—but what calamities I could tell off! what pages they would fill were I to enter into details.

Every one saw with wonder after the rebellion had ceased in the provinces of this Vicariate, which had all fallen under the dominion of the rebels, that religion began to enjoy greater liberty than in the Vicariates which had been spared by the rebels. Three native Priests in different provinces of this Vicariate had been imprisoned during last year, but through the Divine Mercy, contrary to all expectation, they were set at liberty by the mandarins. No one dared to accuse them of rebellion, which was much feared; from the circumstance named above, for the prefects were well aware, that some of the native Priests had taken arms. From this time the Priests were able to exercise their ministry more freely than before.....All my endeavours during these days of calamity were directed to increasing the faith of our neophytes, for this alone could be their consolation in the midst of the sorrows by which they were overwhelmed. I will relate an incident which furnished me with an excellent opportunity for exciting the faith of our Christians.

When the rebel army entered victorious into the interior provinces, the mandarins of the rebels rendered more cruel by success,

after having kept the principal Christians for a long time in prison, and having subjected them to divers tortures to oblige them to deny their faith, at last put them to death and cruelly massacred those who still remained as prisoners amongst the pagans.....About 200 were thus destroyed in hatred to the faith in the eastern province, and 240 others, confined in a small prison near the walls of the city, had been condemned to the flames. Each of them, loaded with a cangue and with fettered feet, expected this cruel death. But on the very day fixed for the execution, the Prefect of the guard who had them in charge, ordered their fetters to be unloosed, and himself shewed them the way by which they might escape. On a given signal, the soldiers endeavoured to set fire to the prison, but whether they had received private instructions, or whether by a special interference of Providence, they threw the combustible matters beyond the prison, so it took some time to reach the building. Our Christians, in the meanwhile, escaped in a body with the exception of two, who either through infirmity or their great age were unable to flee, and so perished in the flames. The rest were at no great distance when the house took fire. The old man who perished was a catechist of more than eighty years of age named Dominic Du.

But of all the martyrs of these provinces the most famous are our Christians of the northern province, in number 100. Their faith was often tried by various and refined tortures, but by the grace of God they always remained victorious. These glorious confessors of Jesus Christ were the richest and noblest of the province; amongst them were some of the pupils of the Maison de Dieu. All had joyful countenances, though I have heard from those who visited these venerable martyrs, that after their cruel floggings, their flesh came off in strips, and that in consequence of their numbers the prison was infected with putrid miasma. These generous confessors were unable for days to take any rest but on their back, and yet always rejoicing they comforted their wives, their children and their neighbours and would not suffer them to express any sorrow in their presence. These valiant soldiers of Christ obtained their triumph in April 1862, but in a cruel and inhuman manner. The mandarins, not daring to have them executed in the accustomed place outside the town in the usual manner by the sword, had large and deep pits dug within the walls, into which they flung the martyrs loaded with cangue and chains, and yet living. With the exception of twenty-seven who had been previously put to death with the sword, all were buried alive in these pits, in which they perished whilst mutually exhorting each other to bear death with constancy, for the faith.

In the month of October, 1863, influenced rather by superstition than by any feelings of humanity, the relations of these martyrs were requested by the mandarins to come and remove the venerated remains to their own villages, and bury them there. As soon as this happy news reached my ears, I appointed two priests and some catechists to proceed to this great translation, and I named the day on which the Christians of the villages, to which the martyrs belonged, should come to the town with the implements required. I gave these priests everything necessary for opening the pits, the exhumation of the corpses, their recognition and their distribution, in order that there should be no doubts afterwards as to the authenticity of the relics. The pagans themselves remarked with wonder that many of the bodies were so intact that any one might recognize them. The joy of the Christians was very great, and there was an increase of respect for our holy religion even among the pagans. On the day of All Saints the sacred bodies of those martyrs who belonged to this village re-entered their native place. I had with me at that time a good number of clergy, several sub-deacons, some priests and our Vicar General, and to honour these martyrs, and to increase the ardour of devotion, I wished to celebrate pontifically the funeral of their precious remains. There was a great concourse of the faithful at this time, not only our own, but also from the Central Vicariate, for the feast of All Saints is held in great honour by the Annamites, because on the following day there is prayer for all departed souls. I divided the clergy and pupils into two bands; the first was to go to the place where the bodies of the martyrs were deposited, and to bring the holy treasures to the church, chanting the *Te Deum*; the other was to remain with me, and to accompany me when I went to meet the procession. The night was calm, and the way was illuminated by lamps. When we met the bodies of the venerable martyrs, every one stopped, and the way being opened for me, I went to kiss the holy relics with profound respect. Our Vicar General kissed them in his turn, and after him, all the other clergy. In this country acts of this kind make a deep impression on those who witness them, and there was no one present who did not envy the fate of these blessed martyrs. We then all returned to the church chanting the *Te Deum*, where I completed all the ceremonies of the funeral according to the pontifical rites. On the day following, I gave a discourse, exalting the faith of the martyrs, and exhorting all the faithful to imitate their constancy. All this no doubt strengthened the faith of our neophytes. Even the pagans came in crowds to witness the honours we paid our martyrs, and in admiration of this sight they praised our religion and the venerable confessors of Jesus Christ. Several

Christian settlements, desiring that their martyrs should receive similar honours, I gladly yielded to the pious request, and renewed these ceremonies in eight or nine places, either myself or by native priests; everywhere in the midst of a great concourse of the faithful and of pagans..... The other provinces, where permitted, received the remains of their martyrs with equal transports of joy, and accompanied them to their own villages in great pomp, to the sound of instruments of music.....

After this imposing and affecting picture, Bishop Alcazar presents another of a solemn ceremony, which no doubt also helped to strengthen the faith of the Christians, and was the occasion of the conversion of a good number of infidels. This was the episcopal consecration of his coadjutor, the Rev. Father Gaspard Fernandez, Vicar-General, who now bears the title of Bishop of Miletopolis, the same which was borne by the venerable predecessor of Bishop Alcazar.

....."I regretted but one thing," adds the worthy Missionary Bishop, "and that was my being unable to speak to the people; I attempted it and exerted my voice to the utmost, but I was heard only by those quite near to me. Since this time we have enjoyed more liberty; many pagans have come to us for instruction in the mysteries of the faith, our catechists get into pagan villages, and many Annamites have embraced the Christian religion.".....

Bishop Alcazar gives here an affecting history of the conversion of a noble widow, the sister of a celebrated mandarin, and mother of an only son, who died a pagan soon after his marriage, leaving a young daughter. This widow, who was a great friend of a pious Christian woman, was in the deepest distress at the loss of her son, who had died without leaving a son to perpetuate the family name. Her friend, who had baptized, when dying, several of the children of this house, endeavoured to comfort her..... "She explained to her as well as she was able the truths of Christianity," says Bishop Alcazar, "and God, Who loves to comfort the afflicted, enlightened the understanding of this pagan widow.. She was brought to us by the same Christian woman who has procured the grace of baptism for some hundreds of children, and been the means of drawing many adults to the faith. The unhappy mother could not restrain her tears when speaking of her son, and the more deeply the truths of faith were impressed on her heart, the more did she mourn over his death while still a pagan. She often visited our coadjutor. She came also to us, and we had much difficulty in comforting her. One day, when tormenting herself about the fate of her son, she asked the catechist: "Would it be possible for me to be baptized for the salvation of my son, even if I could not obtain it for

myself?" Oh! the great power of sorrow! This poor mother is now a pious Christian, and her whole house has received the grace of baptism; that is to say, the widow of the deceased son, her daughter, who though only nine years old frequently approaches the holy table, and the mother-in-law of the illustrious widow, lately dead. By means of this excellent woman many other persons are applying themselves to the study of religious truth, and if our present peace is not disturbed, a good number of neophytes of our village will soon be delivered from the tyranny of the devil.

Although the Society of the Holy Childhood concerns itself only about the eternal salvation of children, it yet brings with it as a consequence the conversion of adults, not only because the marvellous love of the faithful for these little ones, softens the hearts of the pagans and gently inclines them to embrace our religion, but also because the greater part of the conversions in this place are the fruits of the exhortations of those who go about pagan villages in search of sick and dying children. Our numerous neophytes, chiefly elderly women, never forget to give their help to so holy a work. You will see this by the statement which I enclose.

I am, with the greatest respect, Rev. Sir,

Your humble brother and servant in Jesus Christ,

Fr. Hilary Alcazar, of the Order of Preachers,
Bp. of Paphos and Vic. Apost. of Eastern
Tong King.

BRITISH INDIA.

MISSION OF CEYLON.

Extract of Letter from the Rev. Ch. Banjeau, Miss. Apost.,
Oblate of the Immaculate Mary, to the Director of the Society.

Jaffna, 13th Decr. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

.....We have for a long time wished to form a congregation of native religious. Two young men, well tried, had already joined us with the intention of embracing the religious life. A young Cingalese also came to us towards the end of the year..... We thought this a favourable time for yielding to the wishes they had so often and so warmly expressed, and to begin the foundation of our little congregation.

The plan of a rule having received the approbation of our respected bishop, Dr. Semeria, our three postulants entered into a retreat. On the festival of the Patronage of St. Joseph they received the religious habit, and began their noviciate as "Brothers of St. Joseph." Their rule is very simple, and not much burdened with religious exercises. They make their meditation, particular examen, visit to the Blessed Sacrament daily, and a weekly confession to their director; but their other duties do not yet permit them to perform their religious exercises in common; they are not yet sufficiently numerous. On the day appointed we adorned our chapel with the best things we have, which is not saying much, but we did what we could, and our garden supplied us with beautiful flowers. We had just received a beautiful banner of St. Joseph and the Angel Guardian from a generous lady in Paris. We unfurled them both, and forming a procession of our children, we went to meet his lordship with all possible solemnity. The parents of two of our candidates were present, and the ceremony was very touching. The *Veni Creator* was followed by an exhortation to the happy postulants, who then threw themselves at the feet of their parents to beg the paternal blessing. To understand the interest which was then excited, you ought to know that these dear children had for a long time been subjected to the assaults and even persecution of their parents, who desired for their sons a more exalted position, and grieved to see their expectations disappointed. The parents tried threats, abuse, even insulting reproaches to Fr. Banjeau, and threats of judicial proceedings. The most influential persons, even the Queen's Counsel, were sent to one of them; his mother had even declared that she would starve herself to death, and fled to a neighbouring village that it might be thought that excess of grief had driven her mad. During this long and severe trial our young Xavier remained calm and unmoved, and it is unnecessary to say that his mother is still alive and in perfect health both of body and mind.

St. Joseph's day, on which the parents of these two postulants offered of their own accord their children to God, became indeed a day of triumph for grace and of joy for all. Many tears were shed on both sides. The Cingalese candidate, whose parents dwelt in the southern part of the Vicariate, had not been able to invite them to be present. The bishop therefore assumed their place, and said to him: "I will bless you, my dear child, instead of your absent parents, I will be your father." These words were almost prophetic, for in the course of the year, brother Joseph lost both father and mother by death with an interval of only a few months,

so that Bishop Semeria is now really his adopting father. The Christian manner in which this novice accepted the double blow was very edifying. The Holy Child Jesus desired to have him entirely for Himself and our orphans, and he has no other wish. May I not hope, Rev. Sir, that you will love our brothers of St. Joseph, who with unwavering zeal share with us night and day the care of your dear children?

The seed sown on the 17th of last April promises to germinate and become a fine tree. The conduct of these brothers is so good, so simply pious, that the children are most favourably impressed by it. Worldly thoughts have given place to the aspirations of faith, and already one of our dear orphans, Peter, who has always been edifying, has been received into the rising congregation as a "little brother of St. Joseph." He received the habit on the day of the Immaculate Conception and is in his noviciate. It is a great joy to me to gather this fruit of the Holy Childhood and to offer it to our Divine Master. Three other children are on the lists. One of them is one of six Christian orphans who are brought up here at the expense of the Mission; the two others are your children. One of them, Hippolytus, has been already mentioned in your annals as resisting courageously for two or three years all the attacks of his parents, who wished to carry him off by main force; the other, George, has just undergone the same trial, and gained a similar victory. The details of this story are worth relating. George's father, an avowed pagan and a really bad man, placed his son at St. Joseph's from merely worldly motives, but our Lord soon took entire possession of the heart and mind of this child. Wild and rude like his father at his entrance here, he was admitted only conditionally. He was entirely changed by holy Baptism. He became modest, gentle, and calm, and what is remarkable in this country, scrupulously true. He is not a prodigy of learning, but he studies conscientiously, and succeeds pretty well. He writes his own language well, knows a little English, as also Latin, and serves the Mass with great devoutness. He and Hippolytus, his friend and rival, are the tailors of the establishment. Now observe how God dealt with him. His father brought him some *todous*, a kind of gold button which the Indians wear in their ears, and desired him to wear them at once, for the Indians are very vain of the trinkets with which they load themselves. George simply brought the earrings to me, saying that he did not want them, and wished me to take care of them for him; though he afterwards consented that his ears should be pierced, to please his father. But he soon felt influenced to become a religious; and one day, whilst I was engaged in writing, he came

into my room and threw himself at my knees. "What is it, George?" I said, for I thought that he came as was his custom to accuse himself of some little fault. "Ah! my father," he said, "I do not like the world." "Very well, my child, I am glad to see in you so good a disposition." "But, father, I do not desire the pleasures of the world; I wish to be a brother of St. Joseph." "Indeed! but my dear child you are rather late, if you had made your application earlier, I would have admitted you at the same time as Peter." "Ah, yes! that is true: but I was afraid that you, father, would say, Go away: you are too young." A few days after this the father of George called to see his son and enquired what had become of the ornament. He was much displeased that it was not yet worn. "I do not want this *today*," said George in a firm voice, "I do not at all want it." These words were hardly pronounced when the savage pagan became violently enraged, threatening to strike every one he met, and ended by vociferating the following words, equivalent in his mind to a curse: "You do not want that ornament? Very well, give it back to me, and henceforth you shall not be my son, neither will I be your father." George retired without reply, but the calm joy which has ever since shone in his countenance shews that he feels that he has made a good choice and gained a victory over flesh and blood.

We expect much from this little congregation of St. Joseph, we are greatly in want of an institution of this kind for our orphanage. Honour be to the Holy Childhood for its establishment, for without the means sent to us, it would long have remained simply a project. It is indeed a consolation to see these souls, marked by the devil for his own, entering on the way of perfection. I hope the associates of the Holy Childhood will pray for our brothers of St. Joseph, both elder and younger.

In order to excite the piety of our children we kept the month of Mary for the first time in our little chapel, and we have also lately kept the Novena of the Immaculate Conception. I doubt not but these little proofs of our love for Mary have been agreeable to her, for from the month of Mary we date the improvement in the minds of our children. To Mary, whom we all begged to obtain it from her divine Son, we also owe having finished our buildings without accident in the midst of the pouring rains of the *monsoon*, and we had the pleasure of offering the chaplet which we had promised, on the day of her Presentation.....I recommended the children to ask some particular favour during the last novena, and it was immediately after it that thirty children came to ask me to prepare them for confirmation, and fifteen others

requested baptism. I wish you could hear our dear little ones reciting their prayers and catechism while at work in order to be sooner admitted to baptism.

You will like to know how our children become Catechumens. All the children who think alike on this subject, join together, choose their little orator, and at twilight the little flock creep into my room, and fall on their knees, crying, "Father, we are going to be baptised;" my usual remark is, "Oh, you are in too great a hurry—you are giddy pates." Then the orator takes up the word, "It is quite true, father, we have been naughty, but we have not been so for a long time, and we promise to be so no more, but always to try to be very good."

To omit the mention of our little Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, amongst our means of doing good, would be a great mistake. Our dear little associates are very useful as my auxiliaries, and I call them my little apostles. From amongst them are chosen the monitors, each of whom numbers ten or twelve children under his care, whom he overlooks with great advantage to the maintenance of order.

I will now relate a little anecdote which will be doubly interesting to the Holy Childhood. For some months past I have been accustomed to translate some passages from your interesting Annals, to the children, on their first reaching us, instead of catechism. They have been much interested in them, and even taken it into their heads to imitate the little stratagems employed by some of your associates for gaining the halfpenny per month. Now, during the time that we were at work upon our buildings, I rewarded the best labourers by giving to one a picture, to another a leaf of tobacco. One evening several children came into my room, each holding a leaf of tobacco, which is what we should call in Europe a nice sweetmeat, a delicious bonbon. "What do you want?" I asked. "Oh, father, we want a picture." "But, my children, you have already had tobacco." "Yes, but we prefer a picture; we will give the tobacco for a picture." "And what will you do with the image?" "We will tell you, father. The children have established the Society of the Holy Childhood. The parents of some of them give them halfpence, but we have no parents, or else we never see them, and we have nothing to pay our *kauttam*; we mean to sell our picture to the children who have halfpence, and then we join the Society. This was the first news I had of the establishment of the Holy Childhood in this place. You may easily believe that I consented to the proposed exchange, and by this means, and some others, a sum of about ten shillings has been collected. There are a few children among our associates who have

not yet been baptised, but we do not look too sharply after this. Some time after this, little Frederic came to me, and with an air of mystery, whispered something into my ear. A secret—and no doubt an important one. And what is it about? I think I may tell it without indiscretion; it is only about a hen. But, you will say, what has this to do with the Holy Childhood? Now, this is precisely Frederic's secret. Some one has brought him a little chicken, and he came to ask leave to bring it up for the Holy Childhood that he also may have something to give by selling its eggs. I did not, however, give an immediate assent, so that Frederic, who was always thinking of his hen, took every opportunity when I was alone, to coax me and ask about her. Take courage. The hen of the Holy Childhood has been admitted to St. Joseph's; she is in full health, and her eggs and her chickens shall feed the little pagans.

I shall not detain you long with an account of the studies in which we are engaged. They are the same as last year, save that manual labour occupies a larger space in our programme. Our object is not so much to teach a great number of things, as to develop the minds of the children. We give the study of religion the precedence of all others. We devote an hour every day to this employment, explaining alternately the doctrines of religion and its history. The historical explanation is very interesting to the children, but from the scarcity of good books in Tamul, we are obliged to compose a Sacred History, and the work makes but slow progress. When it is completed, and has been made trial of in teaching, we think of printing it. Twice a week the children write a theme upon the subjects which have been taught in the religious class, and I can truly say that I have read compositions which might well be inserted in a catechism of perseverance. Our teaching is principally Tamul. We consider it important that these children should understand thoroughly the rather complicated grammar of their own language, and that they should write and speak it purely and correctly. English is taught to some, merely as a foreign language. We do not intend to make it a deep study, but only to teach it sufficiently to enable the children to read and understand books written in the most simple style. Latin is taught to a privileged class, in the hope that some of them may at some future time be called to serve the mission in the ecclesiastical state, and both languages are taught in order to supply intellectual food to the most advanced children.

The religious exercises followed by the children, are morning prayer, the holy mass, visits to the church after school and meals, rosary, and evening prayers. By a special permission from Bishop

Semeria, we have on Sundays the benediction of the Holy Sacrament, followed by a little sermon. Baptised children generally confess every month, having previously received particular instructions. They are at liberty to go to any confessor of the town whom they prefer, but they are not admitted to Holy Communion without the express permission of the director. There are some who go to confession once a week, and Holy Communion once a fortnight.

And now, Rev. Sir, you have a tolerably complete sketch of the orphanage of St. Joseph, of what is now done there, and what we desire to do.

I have nothing more to say about Jaffna. I must now speak about Batticaloa, and of the good which the zealous pastor, the Rev. Father Rouffiac is doing there. The Holy Childhood has in him a warm and devoted friend. Out of the sum which we offer you this year, more than £6 came from the children who attend his catechism, and whom he has contrived to inspire with a warm interest in the fate of pagan children. We owe to him the greater part of our baptisms of infants in *articulo mortis*. He has had twenty-four baptised during the time comprised in this report, and I have received a letter this very day, announcing the baptisms of ten Mahometan children, six of whom have already taken possession of eternal happiness. The good father also tells me that three others who had been previously baptised, are also dead, and he adds, "So there are already twenty-one. The Infant Jesus will make them His guard of honour on Christmas day."

As I shall probably often have to mention Batticaloa, I will at once tell you that it is a district of Tamul, in the south east of the isle, at the extremity of the vicariate of Jaffna. It contains a pagan population of seventy or eighty thousand souls, with only 2,865 Catholics. In this part of the province is the district of Binterne, inhabited by the Vedahs, a people, aborigines of the island, and still entirely savage. Their language is a corrupt Cingalese, and their food is wild honey and the flesh of beasts, which they hunt with bow and arrow. They make no use of fire-arms. This tribe is said to be descended from the ancient kings of the country, who took refuge in the woods when the island was invaded by the Indian emigration from Bengal. They are idolators, and as their chief divinity, they adore the tortoise, Ebba. Father Rouffiac has long been seeking means for getting at them in the heart of their forests; if he could at least send them some intrepid baptiser, and get some of their dying children baptised, it would be some satisfaction to send to heaven a few individuals of a tribe which is rapidly decreasing, and will in the end totally disappear. In the mean time the

dear father gleans where he can, and if he cannot yet give us Vedas, he gives us Mahometans instead. I strongly recommend this interesting mission to the prayers of the Associates of the Holy Childhood.

Obedient to your orders, and recollecting that *nonprogređi regredi est*, we have endeavoured to do better than last year, and are now able joyfully to pour the sum of £16 into the chest of the Holy Childhood, renewing our promise to do still better next year, if we can. The progress of the association in Ceylon is like all Indian things, necessarily slow; but, on comparing with past years, we observe uninterrupted progress. Yet it is not without difficulty that our dear fathers obtain this increase in our contributions. The Indians are prone to become lethargic, and we must be continually awakening them. This happened at Jaffna, for the Rev. Father Mourait having been, during his visits to cholera patients, attacked by this malady himself, his long convalescence was fatal to the Society. It is but lately that he has been again able to resume his collections, and the fruit of his labours will not appear till next year.

The Rev. Father Chounavel, writes from Chilaw, sending me at the same time £3. "I have not the good news to send you as I hoped to have done. I have at different times endeavoured to establish the Holy Childhood, and I have enrolled 202 children. I hoped to have taken advantage of the arrival of some pictures and medals, to make those children pay their subscription who had as yet only given in their names; but the good father who took my place during the mission of Vennassor, forgot to demand the sixpence, and was content with distributing a number of pictures and medals."

The Rev. Fr. Le Belcou, his neighbour, after deploring that the severe labours of this year, have prevented his extending the society as he would have wished, gives me nevertheless the names of several places where he has spoken of it, and in which he has established some dozen collectors. He mentions a circumstance which cannot fail to interest our dear Associates in Europe. It is this. During an epidemic fever which raged in the Mission, 300 Catholic children had the happiness to carry their baptismal robes without spot, to the feet of the Lamb; "and I attribute the grace of which they have been the subjects to the introduction of the Association of the Holy Childhood into my Mission."

Lastly, our dear Fr. Rouffiac writes to me: "I have formed a subdivision at Saint Croix, in the following manner. At the first proposal to reorganise the sections, the whole of my little regiment of associates mutinied. There were festivals kept at Pouliantivau,

there were none at Saint Croix. 'Let the children of Pouliantivau pay then, for our parts we will give nothing;' this was their very emphatic declaration. But to have festivals it was necessary to complete a division, and this was not easy. To conciliate matters, we agreed that to make up the numbers of the series which we might form, we would name five or six volunteers, who should go out at the proper time and get what they could in order to supply the sums which ought to have been paid by the numbers wanting, and that we would inscribe the names of Saints in the lists in their places. So next year I shall bring forward my little gleaners as good examples in this work for the salvation of souls.

Saint Croix is the name of a Church at *Sarikalmounic*, a place of which you can form no idea without having seen it. It is nature in its most sylvan aspect. It is twenty-five miles south of Pouliantivau, the chief place of the district of Batticaloa. The usual access to it is by the river, and I wish our young friends could make the voyage. What a number of new things they would see! Thus in the evening the whole river is covered with boats with torches—the appearance is fairy like; you would say there was an illumination; but in honour of whom? Not exactly in honour of any one, but on account of the fish which are caught in this manner. On the prow of the boat they make a very flaring fire, and near to it leans over a curious sort of fisherman, with his bow bent, and the arrow ready to fly. If the fish, attracted by the fire, raises its head for an instant, it pays for its curiosity by receiving a mortal shaft and is instantly hoisted into the bark, by means of a cord fastened to the arrow. I do not think anything is known of fishing with darts and by torch light in France, (but it is in Scotland,) but every country has its own customs. When near *Sarikalmounic*, a name which our young associates must remember, for in this obscure corner of the world there are still associates of the Holy Childhood; our young friends would be amazed to see on the surface of the water, a number of horns and great noses, constantly at work like the bellows of a forge.....two horns for each muzzle. And these strange creatures are buffalos—yes buffalos. And what are they doing there? Oh everything at Saint Croix is not rose colour; the luxuriant vegetation of these banks, the close covers of the thickets, the close stems of the reeds which border the river, afford an asylum to thousands of little warlike insects whose sting is so sharp, that it penetrates even the thick skin of the buffalo, and the prick of which is so painful, that the poor animal vanquished in his strength by so weak a foe, has no other refuge from these terrible mosquitos but the bed of the river, into which he plunges his whole body, and remains there

immoveable for hours, having only his nostrils above the water, and of necessity his horns also. Think how delightful must be the life of the Missionary in the midst of this winged army of persecutors thirsting for his blood, and which are every where to be found without the possibility of escape either from their provoking buzzing, or their multiplied attacks. If the buffalo is obliged to take refuge in the water, whither shall the Missionary fly to escape this torture and enjoy a little repose? Oh! were it not that at Saint Croix there are souls for whom the Lord Jesus died, and also associates of the Holy Childhood, it would be better to visit these places only in spirit. But our Lord has even here a little knot of simple and good disciples. A few years ago, I went with Fr. Chounavel to preach a little Mission to them, and I cannot tell you the happiness I then experienced in this savage country and amongst these poor inhabitants of the woods.....It is one of the pleasant remembrances of my missionary life. The Holy Childhood has some real gleaners on these shores—who make up little sheafs of ears, not of corn, but of rice, that is of immortal souls.

I shall end my chronicle by a word about Manaar. The zeal of the Rev. Fr. Boutin and Le Lons has planted the Holy Childhood on the burning sands of this isle, formerly rendered illustrious by the death of St. Fr. Xavier, and watered by the blood of 700 martyrs. Of the Christians now here we may say: *Quantum mutati ab illis*;—Morally as well as physically, Manaar is a desert; nevertheless the dear Fathers have planted the standard of the Holy Childhood in this island. They send us about eight shillings. May this small gift draw down the blessing of God upon this vineyard, which the savage beast, schism, has lately so completely devastated.

Accept, Rev. Sir, the assurance of the sentiments of profound respect and the sincere gratitude with which I have the honour to be, Dear Rev. Sir and honoured benefactors,

Your humble and devoted servant in Jesus and Mary,

Ch. Bonjeau, O.M.I.

REPORT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS AND EXPENSES,

Connected with the Society of the Holy Childhood in the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, from Jan. 1865 to Jan. 1866.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.

WESTMINSTER.

	£.	s.	d.
London	6	4	0
" Brompton	9	19	0
Newhall Convent	4	9	0
	20	12	0

BEVERLEY.

Brough	14	0	
Danby	10	9	
Richmond	3	0	
" Convent of Peace	2	0	0
Stourton	12	0	
	3	19	9

BIRMINGHAM.

Baddeley	1	0	0
Banbury Convent	10	0	
Birmingham, St. Ann's Convent..	8	6	
" Handsworth, Convent of Mercy	14	0	
Leamington	1	0	0
Princethorpe Convent	1	0	0
Radford	12	0	
Rugby, Convent of Providence ..	6	6	
Spetchley	1	12	6
Sedgeley Park School	1	2	0
Oulton Convent	10	0	
Wolverhampton	3	0	0
Wootton	4	3	6
	15	19	0

HEXHAM.

Birtley	18	0	
Cowpen	1	4	0
Darlington, Convent of Mt. Carmel	2	0	0
" Convent of St. Clare	1	5	0
Morpeth	12	0	
	5	19	0

LIVERPOOL.

Blackpool	12	0	
Liverpool, Convent of Notre Dame	13	0	0
Wigan, Convent of Notre Dame ..	4	10	0
	18	2	0

MENEVIA AND NEWPORT.

Belmont	20	0	0
Cardiff, Convent of Providence ..	4	4	
Newport Convent of Providence ..	12	3	
	20	16	7

NOTTINGHAM.

	£.	s.	d.
Boston	6	0	
Barlbro	13	6	
Corby	3	9	
Glossop	7	0	
Grace Dieu	10	0	
Garendon	1	13	9
Loughborough, Convent of Providence	9	6	
Radcliffe College	2	12	6
Nottingham, Convent of Mercy ..	5	3	0
Shepherd	1	0	0
St. Bernard's Abbey	3	7	0
" Reformatory	10	0	
Whitwick	5	0	
	17	1	0

NORTHAMPTON.

Great Marlow, Convent of Notre Dame	5	3	
Northampton, Convent of Notre Dame	1	16	2
Salt Hill College	1	0	0
	3	1	5

PLYMOUTH.

Abbotsleigh Convent	1	0	0
Exeter	1	6	
Lanherne, Carmelite Convent ..	1	8	0
Lulworth	5	0	0
Lymington	1	0	0
Stapehill, Cistercian Convent ..	6	0	
Ugbrooke	6	0	
	9	1	6

SALFORD.

Stakestead	6	0	
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SHEREWSBURY.

Anonymous	2	0	0
Birkenhead, 1864	4	0	0
" 1865	3	0	0
Holt Hill Convent	1	0	0
Upton Hall Convent	1	0	0
	11	0	0

SOUTHWARK.

	£.	s.	d.
Bushy	6	0	
Claremont	3	0	
Crayford	10	0	
London, Convent of Notre-dame, ...	10	2	6
Norwood Convent	11	6	
Ryde, Isle of Wight	12	6	
Reading	13	9	
	12	19	3

TOTAL FROM ENGLAND.

Westminster	20	12	0
Beverley	3	19	9
Birmingham	15	19	0
Hexham	5	19	0
Liverpool	18	2	0
Menevia and Newport	20	16	7
Nottingham	17	1	0
Northampton	3	1	5
Plymouth	9	1	6
Salford	6	0	0
Shrewsbury	11	0	0
Southwark	12	19	3
	138	17	6

SCOTLAND.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

	£.	s.	d.
Edinburgh, Convent of St. Margaret	1	19	6

WESTERN DISTRICT.

Laggan	1	1	0
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TOTAL FROM SCOTLAND.

Eastern District	1	19	6
Western District	1	1	0
	3	0	6

RECEIPTS.

England	138	17	6
Scotland, ...	3	0	6
	141	18	0
Deduct Expenses	36	18	0
Sent to Paris, Jan. 25, and Feb. 6, ...	105	0	0

Acknowledged Feb. 12.

EXPENSES.

	£.	s.	d.
Printing Annals	5	2	9
No. 63	5	4	6
No. 64	5	4	6
No. 65	4	0	8
No. 66	3	16	8
No. 67	6	1	0
No. 68	29	10	1
Pictures	1	8	0
Carriage	1	4	6
Postage Stamps	4	15	5
	36	18	0

HOLY CHILDHOOD REPORT FOR IRELAND, FROM JANUARY, 1865, TO JANUARY, 1866.

ARMAGH.

Archbishop of Armagh	1	0	0
Woodvale	6	0	
	1	6	0

KILMORE.

Cootehill	2	15	6
Castlerahan School	10	0	
	3	5	6

MEATH.

Convent of Mercy, Kells	8	0	0
Tullamore	3	0	
	8	3	0

ARDAGH.

Convent of Mercy Moate	5	0	0
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DOWN AND CONNOR.

	£	s.	d.
Crossgar	1	1	6
Convent of Mercy, Derry ..	5	10	0
Convent of Mercy, Belfast ..	1	0	6
	7	12	0

FERNES.

Mount Carmel Convent, New Ross	1	4	0
Convent of Mercy, Wexford ..		8	6
Eaniscorthy	1	4	6
	2	17	0

KILDARE AND LEIGHLIN.

Presentation Convent, Bagnalstown	16	3	
Presentation Convent, Paulstown	2	16	0
Baltinglass		17	0
Enfield		18	0
Presentation Convent, Stradbally	2	2	9
Portarlinton		2	8
	7	12	8

CORK.

Ursuline Convent	11	0	0
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LIMERICK.

Glenroe	10	0	0
Limerick		14	2
	10	14	2

KILLALOE.

Convent of Mercy, Birr	5	14	0
Borrisokane		13	0
	6	7	0

WATERFORD AND LISMORE.

Waterford	10	0	0
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TUAM.

Convent of Mercy, Tuam	3	0	0
Convent of Mercy, Castlebar ..		7	0
Convent of Mercy, Ballinrobe ..	2	0	0
Convent of Mercy, Westport ..	2	0	0
	7	7	0

GALWAY.

Galway	6	0	
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ACHONEY.

	£	s.	d.
Sisters of Charity, Benada Tubbercurry	7	3	4

CASHEL.

Presentation Convent, Thurles ..	2	0	0
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DUBLIN.

Rathmines	5	0	8
Cooladangan		12	6
Tranquilla Convent, Rathmines (for 1864 and 1865)	6	13	8
St. Theresa's Convent, Warremount	6	8	5
Convent of the Sisters of Charity, North William Street	1	0	0
Carmelite Monastery, Harold's Cross		15	0
Delgarny	1	1	6
Convent Glasnevin	2	5	0
Loretto Convent, Balbriggan ..	2	4	6
Orphanage Latelands, Sandy-mount		3	0
Presentation Convent, Clondalbin		7	4
Schools of St. Laurence O'Toole		3	0
Dublin Collections	31	12	0
	58	6	7

TOTAL FROM IRELAND.

	£	s.	d.
Dioceses of			
Armagh	1	6	0
Kilmore	3	5	6
Meath	8	3	0
Ardagh	5	0	0
Down and Connor	7	12	0
Ferns	2	17	0
Kildare and Leighlin	7	12	8
Cork	11	0	0
Limerick	10	14	2
Killaloe	6	7	0
Waterford and Lismore ..	10	0	0
Tuam	7	7	0
Galway		6	0
Achonry	7	3	4
Cashel	2	0	0
Dublin	58	6	7
Total	149	0	3

RECEIPTS.

Ireland, ...	149	0	3
Deduct Expenses	41	14	3
Sent to Paris, ...	107	6	0

EXPENSES.

Printing of Annals Nos. 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68	34	5	5
Pictures and Postage	7	8	10
	41	14	3

We have sent to the Rev. N. Wolfrey, Sydney, Australia, 10 copies of Nos. 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.

To the Rt. Rev. Dr. Charbonneau, Bishop of Bangalore, 25 copies of the same.

To the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Ceylon, 20 copies of the same.

To the Abbe de Girardin, director of the Society of the Holy Childhood at Paris, 25 copies.

To the Lady Superior of the Benedictine Convent, Parramatta, Sydney, Australia, 30 copies of the same.

For all of which copies we have received no money in exchange.

If any mistake should be found in the names of places or amount of subscriptions our readers will confer a favour by informing the Secretary, and the mistake shall be rectified in No. 71, for May, 1866.

As the number of Annals sent to each collector is regulated by the amount of money received either by the Treasurer or Secretary, (one set of Annals for 6s.) it is very possible that in many instances too many may be sent. Such mistakes will be rectified immediately if the collectors will be so good as to inform the Secretary how many dozen members of the Society of the Holy Childhood they have in their different localities.

N.B.—Our subscribers are particularly requested in writing to ask for cards, pictures, and medals, to be so good as to state the exact number of each they require, for otherwise they may receive less than they require.

ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 71.—MAY, 1866.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

The hand of the young missionary who wrote the letter which we publish immediately after this article, will never more be raised to bless his dear Christians of Su-Tchuen, or to baptize the poor little children of infidels. This hand now holds in heaven, the palm awarded to the Confessor of the Faith, and to the generous martyr. —A letter from Bishop Desfleches, Vict. Apost. of Eastern Su-Tchuen, addressed to the Bishop of Nantes, announces that the Rev. Francis Mabileau, of the Society of Foreign Missions, has been put to death by the enemies of our holy faith.

The Rev. Francis Mabileau was a native of Paimhœuf, in Brittany, and belonged to a gentleman's family. He laboured for seven years to spread the light of the Gospel in Eastern Su-Tchuen with unbounded zeal, activity and courage. In the month of June last, he prepared himself to go to a distant province, to strengthen and comfort some poor christians, who were persecuted by a wicked mandarin. On the eve of departure he wrote to his brother and sister : "Peace is not yet re-established. I am going thither that I may endeavour, with the help of God to restore some of the ruin which has been caused, and dry some of the tears which are being shed. Pray much for me." Subsequently, on the 27th July, Fr. Mabileau announced his arrival at Yeou-Yang-Tcheau, the place of his new abode, after having escaped great dangers. There he was assailed by a storm of threats and outrage; some of the inhabitants wished to force him to return to Tchang-Tien; thus all refused him hospitality, so the mandarin governor gave him a pagoda to live in. He hoped however that, with the support of the French legation, he should be able to find a house suitable for the celebra-

tion of the holy mysteries, and in which he might also be able to establish the Holy Childhood in the midst of a population of barbarians, capable of perpetrating any crime, against missionaries and Europeans. When he wrote his last letter, he had succeeded in ingratiating himself with a great number of the inhabitants; but he had only been able to celebrate mass during the night. He was sustained by the hope that he should by degrees triumph over every obstacle, adding: "They will do with me whatever is God's will, and I am ready for whatever He may appoint."

The martyr's hour was not far distant; our Lord was there waiting to give him a share in His cross, and to crown his labours before the time. Bishop Desfleches thus announces his martyrdom to the Bishop of Nantes: ".....The diocese of Nantes has just given a new martyr to the Church of God. One of your priests has shed his blood for Jesus Christ. We have received with a mixture of deep grief and holy consolation, the intelligence that my dear colleague and pro-vicar, the Rev. Fr. Mabileau, who was so generously given up by your Lordship to the Foreign Missions, was put to death on the 29th August, by the enemies of christianity."

After various details respecting this odious persecution, Bishop Desfleches thus continues: "Fr. Mabileau being informed of the dangers he was incurring, gave notice of it to all the mandarins, civil, and military, but not one took any precautions to protect him. Some neophytes then begged him to retire into the country, which he refused to do, besides, the country was no more safe than the town. The principal conspirators assembled daily at the dwelling of the persecuting mandarin Tong, who, as he did not wish to quit the country had hired a house in the town. On the 29th of August, the feast of the beheading of St. John Baptist, about ten o'clock in the evening, the pagoda was suddenly attacked by armed men, who rushed upon it, broke open the doors, and fell upon our dear colleague, whom they soon covered with wounds, thus taking the life, which, like a good shepherd, he gave willingly for his sheep, for it was to save his flock that he went cheerfully to these distant and dangerous parts. We feel confident that his death, precious in the sight of God, will obtain for us the termination of an atrocious persecution and the beginning of numerous conversions. My heart is full of sorrow when I think of the loss our Mission has sustained in one so pious, so zealous, and so intelligent, upon whom I reckoned as my successor in this Vicariate apostolic. But my sorrow vanishes in the consideration that he is now much happier than we are, having obtained the reward for which we still labour, and that in heaven he will not forget before God the souls whom he loved when here below.

Let this be also our own consolation and confidence. If the generous confessor of the Faith does not forget in heaven those whom he loved upon earth, how should he forget the Society of the Holy Childhood which he prized so highly and desired to establish in the very town in which he fell a victim to his charitable devotion? The following letter, which should be perused with religious respect, offers an affecting proof of his feelings towards our dear Society.

From the Rev. Fr. Mabileau, of the Society of Foreign Missions,
Pro-vicar in Eastern Su-Tchuen, to the Director of the Society.

Tchang King, 30th Aug. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

In spite of the critical position in which we have been for more than a year, the Society of the Holy Childhood pursues its accustomed course. The fury of the pagans is no longer directed against our dispensary at Yun-Yang. It has been repaired and works well. But we had hardly completed our restorations on this side when we became the objects of a cruel persecution at Fong-Jau-Kien, on the banks of the great river which flows down to Han-Keon. It was on Passion Sunday, March 13th, the anniversary of the disasters of Tchang-King, that the pagans raised the standard of revolt. There, as at Tchang-King nothing was spared; all the houses of the Christians were destroyed; the dispensary was razed to the ground, and our baptisers were all obliged to fly. For three months the Christians were in exile, and have only just returned, destitute and in a miserable condition. The Holy Childhood has also sustained losses which we have as yet been unable to repair. People's minds are still excited, and we are waiting a little for quiet to re-establish the work of baptising in this town and territory. At present it would be imprudent. The author of this persecution is a mandarin, a former persecutor. Six Christians are dead; more than fifty have been cruelly beaten, and all the others have been expelled the territory. We have passed a very trying year; a year which will be an epoch in the history of China. For eight months we have been a prey to a horrible famine. Some sort of soil, straw reduced to powder, herbs of all kinds, and the bark of trees, have served as food to a number of unfortunate creatures. It was not an uncommon thing to see bands of famishing people wandering hither and thither, gathering up whatever might offer as a means for appeasing their hunger. Famine in China is indeed frightful. Rice was sold at five times the usual price, and even the rich were

in difficulty at finding none to buy. The famine began to be felt in the month of January, and was a signal for the destruction of children. This crime soon became general, and many preferred giving them poison to seeing them die by degrees of hunger and want.

Very near our college there lived a poor woman, who, having only a few sapecs left in her possession, spent them upon a pound of meat and a little poison. All the family partook of this and died, with the exception of a little child, who came in too late for this horrible feast. Whole families have been destroyed in this manner, during this famine, and they have even gone so far as to feed upon each other. On this side of the river, two children having seen their brother eaten by their parents, threw themselves into the river to avoid the same fate. Human flesh has even been publicly sold. A child 12 years old was sold, killed, and eaten, but the guilty person was denounced by a man who was filled with horror at the crime, and afraid that he might himself one day become a prey to the cannibals. What is to be said of crimes of this nature, committed in the interior of families?

We would gladly have collected all the forsaken children, but, alas ! means fail us, money has lost a third of its value, and we have not enough to cover our ordinary expenses. I confess that my heart was very sad, and I could hardly take my small portion of food while thinking of the poor starving creatures whom I could not relieve. I could only receive those who were laid at my door, in the streets, or before the houses of Christians during the night, and yet there were many who could not be admitted. Ah! if I had had a telegraph with which to inform you and receive your aid in good time, we might have had a whole legion of poor orphans. I was obliged to submit, confining myself to giving some money to old and pious women, who went about conferring Baptism upon these little creatures devoted to certain death. They died on all sides. Within the last few days a child of 10 or 12 years old was found upon the high road almost entirely devoured.

We have tried to obtain provisions from the public granaries, in the hope of saving a greater number of the unfortunate people, but our attempts have been useless.

Our baptisers have exercised their functions with great activity and with fruit. Very few baptised children have escaped death. Nearly all are already gone to pray for their benefactors. Their parents had so little food that many children died of starvation. A good old man of 99, called Jerome, seeing what evil days had risen, went into the midst of the rebels who were then on the frontiers of Su Tchuen. "Why did you come such a distance at your

age?" asked the Missionary Father. "Father," he replied, "when I found that the rebels had reached this province, which had already been ravaged by famine, I felt pity for the poor children who would die without the grace of Baptism. The former Bishop, Dr. de Maxula, used to tell me, thirty years ago, that under such circumstances I should not hesitate to leave everything in order to do this good work, and so expiate my faults. I obeyed him in spite of my great age; I have felt the fatigue of the voyage but little." Excellent old man! Without money, and furnished only with a few pills, he remained for two months in the midst of the brigands, who so much respected his bald head, that the chief of the band, struck with his charity, ordered that he should be supplied with food and treated with respect. He forbid his being molested under the severest penalties, and was pleased with having met with a man of such robust old age, believing that it would bring him good luck. At last the old apostle, feeling that he could not pray at his ease in the midst of these robbers, took leave of them and returned to his family, who were surprised and delighted to see him again. He had baptised nearly 200 children. I have seen this excellent old man, who is not afraid to walk ten miles in order to keep the Easter solemnities in this town.

Our Orphanages go on well. All our orphans who are capable of working are employed; some in agriculture, others in learning a trade, and some of them study Latin. Our girls have been adopted in Christian families, or else are married and conduct themselves in their new situation in an exemplary manner. A singular circumstance has occurred this year in a little orphanage in the country. I did not witness it, and so can only answer for the uprightness and good faith of the priests and nuns who relate it. On the 10th of May an orphan, 11 years old, fell accidentally into the well of the house, which I had had dug three years before. It is very deep. The child remained an hour in the well, and then cried out loudly. The frightened nuns ran thither, and with the aid of the Christians of the neighbourhood they succeeded in rescuing the poor child. She was hardly drawn out of the well when she told them that whilst she was there she saw a venerable woman who called her and said: "Join your hands and make the sign of the cross." She did so, and was immediately borne above the water, and from thence had made the cry which they had heard. She fell into the well at 8 o'clock and it was not till 9 that she was taken out. No doubt the associates of the Holy Childhood were at that time engaged in reciting prayers for their dear proteges in China, and our Lord was no doubt pleased to allow His Holy Mother to go to the rescue of the child who bears her name. She is called Mary:

Kien, and dwells in the orphanage Tchang-Chain-Tchin, (the town of the water dragon.)

The misfortunes of the last year have hindered the execution of our projects. We are about to establish larger orphanages. We wish above all to increase the number of our schools and to establish mixed schools, and for this purpose we make an appeal to your generosity. We want funds—this alone has prevented our doing more both for the orphanages and schools.

Pray, Rev. Sir, accept the respectful salutations with which I have the honour to be

Your humble and devoted servant,
Francis Mabileau,
Provicar.

From the Rev. Father Bourdilleau, Jesuit Missionary in Kian-Nan, to the Rev. Father Gonnet of the same Society, Superior of the Mission.

Kiang-Nan, Aug. 16, 1865.

Rev. Father Superior,

I think it may be useful to send you some information respecting the island of Tsum-min, and a few anecdotes which may assist you in following the development of the Society in this small corner of the vast field committed to the care of the Society of Jesus. It is situated between the two banks of the great river, of which it is as it were the tongue. This is indeed the etymology of the ancient name of Tsum-min, *Kiang-Si—tongue* of Kiang.

I. The central Orphanage.—As during former years, the central Orphanage is still of the greatest service. It is as it were the heart of the district. It is there our widows and nuns assemble for the annual retreat; there are formed our workers for the future. This house is as it were the beacon of Christian charity, seen by all and proclaiming loudly what our holy religion aims at, namely, the temporal as well as the spiritual regeneration of mankind. This establishment includes, as you know, besides the nursery for infants, a school, and a house of instruction, 570 children have already been brought to the nursery. Last year only 320 were presented, and now we have 276 in two months. These children having suffered much when they are brought to us, few survive, and these few are placed in the care of Christian families. We have added 17 more wet-nurses this year, for the town and the great orphanage. Still the greater number of infants die and seem to say : "God has prolonged

our life for a short time, that the Holy Childhood may have time to open to us the gates of heaven. Your task is accomplished. We go above."

2nd. The School is divided into the boarding and day schools. The first comprehends ; 1st, some good single women, who are to be schoolmistresses, and who come to get instruction and experience ; 2nd, some select pupils, whom their parents wish to be better educated, whom we receive as a reward to their parents for their zeal for the propagation of the Faith, or for their kindness in bringing up pagan children. 3rd, some children, whose parents are bad Christians, and who are induced to leave them for a few months and return after having been taught their prayers and the most important doctrines. 4th, orphans who are nearly grown up and who are permanent residents in the house. In all we have about 25 boarders.

The day school is much more numerous, and comprises all those pupils who come in the morning and return home in the evening. On Sunday there is the school of perseverance for those former pupils who wish to employ the repose of the Lord's day in looking over what they have already learned, and in hearing the explanation of the Holy Scriptures. These external pupils vary from 60 to 80.

3rd. The Home of Instruction contains at most 6 catechumens at a time. We receive here for a few weeks only, women of all ages who, having decided upon becoming Christians, have no other means of learning prayers and getting instruction in the doctrine of the Church. The care of instructing them devolves upon one of the nuns, who is assisted in turn by the grown-up boarders. Twenty-six catechumens have been instructed in the course of the year. In this number we reckon neophytes who have been solidly formed to a Christian life, and who on returning to their families, have by their example and their exhortations gained other catechumens to Jesus Christ.

II. The Town Nursery.—This establishment, which was opened in the town of Tsum-min more than a year ago, has had some hard trials; attempts at burning, thefts, doors and fastenings broken, two children carried off, &c., &c. The visit of a mandarin and a proclamation of this worthy magistrate have been successful in removing our fears. The good angels, jealous at seeing these children passing into other hands, have obtained for our administratrix the good will of the guardian of a pagan orphanage, where she has in consequence been able secretly to baptise several dying children. A former attempt to penetrate into this orphanage under the venerable Father Claudin failed, and besides subjected one of our Chris-

tians to bad treatment. In spite of our difficulties we number 107 children in the nursery. As we are anxious to obtain a good reputation for this house, we dispense twice as much in proportion for nurses and clothing here as the central orphanage: this is necessary for the present.

Whether in the orphanage, or the town, all those employed are devoted to the work. I will just instance the good woman who has the care of the great nursery. Her life is to me a problem, without regular sleep, or regular meals, she is always on her feet. If a child cries in the night, well or ill, she watches at its pillow, and warms its milk or broth. She has to wash the linen, and pay particular attention to a dozen sick orphans, and who, though grown up, cannot be placed with other Christians. She loves her employment, no doubt by a special grace from God. No one else has hitherto been able to go through all this work, of which the fatigue is increased in summer by the heat and miasma. With only the help of two of the elder orphans this excellent woman is sufficient for everything, and wants no further aid. In June last the typhus fever had almost carried her off. She received the last sacraments, and prepared herself for death. But God's holy will was only to try us, and to give her an opportunity to show how much virtue she possessed. I have never yet met with so simple and child-like a character. When left alone she was constantly speaking aloud to our Blessed Lord, to His Holy Mother, or St. Joseph. The expressions of her ardent love for our Lord were so touching that we could not restrain our tears. This was her last will: "Father," she said, "when I am dead, let me be dressed in my worst dress; let my coffin be made of the commonest and thinnest planks. But I have one favour to ask—I should like to be buried amongst the orphans." Seeing her out of danger, I said, "You are better." "Yea," she replied, "all my little angels in heaven, have closed the gate against me." "They have done right. Send them many more brothers and sisters, and later they will be ready to receive you." As soon as she regained a little strength she resumed her former employments. May it please God to preserve her to us for many years!

As to the orphans sent at three different times from Chang-hai to Tsum-min, our Christians have hitherto considered it an honour to treat them better, clothe them better, and instruct them with more care than the orphans of the island itself. Many of them have suffered from the hideous complaint they contracted on the continent, and some of the Christians in a moment of weakness sent us back the children infected with the itch. Immediately a tidy, unmarried woman offered to take charge of them. God blessed her

courage. The first who was committed to her care was speedily cured; a second and a third followed. Her good example touched the hearts of others, and the adopting parents thought no longer of sending away these children, but undertook to cure them themselves.

Our islanders may have their good qualities, but I think that in their utter recklessness for the lives of children they surpass the people of the continent. On the 3rd of Jan. I counted 37 parcels of straw, each containing a dead child, in a distance of 9 miles, in the canal of Sir-kai, part of which was in the town. This custom of throwing children into the canal causes many infanticides, for they do not wait for death before doing so. A doctor, who is a convert, told me that the reason is, that the pagans believe that the soul of the child, carried away by the current, will not be able to find its mother, and to come back and take the milk intended for the children to be born after it.

Being shocked at seeing some pupils in the town with a cord round their neck, to which wooden padlocks were fixed, I remarked that these children were not dogs that they should have padlocks on their necks. A pagan who was present replied, that to make a child submissive he must be treated like an animal.

Our Tsum-mins are renowned for their litigious propensities; they have penalties to pay, and a certain number of sapecs for everything, and these they exact for the slightest offence. To kill an ox or a dog, to pull up a tree, to remove a stone at the wrong time, are almost considered public crimes. Should a neighbour make any unpleasant remark, if the culprit does not immediately stifle the affair by giving him a sum of money, the mayor and the informer arrive, and there is a law-suit, which ends in the ruin of the person accused. The only crime that is allowed to go free is child-murder. The killing of an infant calls forth no remark from any one. I have never yet seen a Tsum-miner made uneasy on this subject. Religion can alone teach esteem for the child so greatly despised by paganism.

At the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, two good women brought me each a little orphan to baptise. One was fresh and full of life, the other had hardly a breath left. The latter but just born, had been thrown away upon a dunghill. Rats, flies, mosquitos had tormented it, worms swarmed upon its little body, the lower part of which was in a state of decay. The skin of the face was so gnawed that it was difficult to distinguish the senses for the anointing. As soon as the completion of the ceremonies had taken place, the gates of heaven were opened to receive this blessed child.

Less fortunate was a Christian widow. Hearing that a pagan woman had placed her new-born child in a basket of filth, she went

to her in hopes to save the child. She was bitterly deceived. The mother rose, ran to the basket, carried it to her bed, and suffocating the infant, cried out; "This one you shall not have."

A seminarist who is now a priest, Father Tsiam, going from Sir-Kai-on to the town, passed through the pagan suburb of Gui-dia-jeou. In the street he met a woman, who was preparing to throw a little girl into the canal, while the people of the town watched her proceedings with perfect indifference. "Give me that child," said our fervent seminarist. "I have a relation who will bring it up carefully." After a few difficulties the child was given up to him. Father Tsiam was known to be a bachelor, so his conduct attracted the attention of the neighbours, and in a few moments he was surrounded by a crowd of curious people. Without however being at all disturbed by this he asked for a cup of water, and baptised the child. Being at ease about the fate of his soul, he purchased a little of the rice cake, called *ko*, and gave him some to eat. After this he made a beautiful exhortation, which began as follows: "It is said that the European missionaries collect children, with the intention either to eat them or to make them into opium or other medicines, or holy bread, but these are calumnies, absurdities; on the contrary, they practise the first call of the Christian law, which is to love God and our neighbour as ourselves."...He then traced so beautiful a picture of our holy religion and spoke of the value of the soul in so convincing a manner, that the impression which he made converted more than one of his hearers, and probably will convert several others. It is in this manner that the Holy Childhood helps the Propagation of the Faith.

An unfortunate Christian, an opium smoker, and, it is said, in consequence a thief, had resisted all the admonitions of the missionaries. Affected by the desolate condition of his family I tried this year a last remedy. This man had formerly adopted an orphan, and I remarked that he had a great love for this girl, now 12 years old. Without saying anything to him, one day, after service, I detained her in the church and had her taken to the orphanage. This proved the moment of grace for our smoker. Broken-hearted, with tears in his eyes, he came to ask pardon, and followed the barrow which carried away the child, exclaiming, "If I must die in curing myself of opium, I willingly consent; but never to live separated from my orphan." He kept his word contrary to the opinion of those who thought that though the feelings of the heart were moved, his will had been rendered inert by the use of opium. He succeeded in breaking off from the poison that very day, and having remained for a week at Hom-sau, close to the orphanage, under the care of a doctor, he returned

to his house *cured*, and his orphan was restored to him. It may justly be said of him : in saving others he has saved himself.

Since Father Clavelin has set up the Holy Childhood at Tsum-min, the zeal of our Christians has daily increased. To bring up orphans has become a duty, especially with our single women, and as here they are both numerous and fervent, the good example spreads to other members of their family. Hence it is a question who shall bring up most orphans in the best manner. In those districts where these good women leave their houses to live in the Kom-sou, their example cannot of course have the same effect; but here by degrees it has become an honour, a comfort, a pious duty to take charge of orphans. It is a condition for frequent communion and intercourse with the missionary. To threaten any family with the removal of its orphan is a great punishment. It is looked upon as a public humiliation; a misfortune which is feared, and which is to be avoided at any cost.

It is true that God repays our Christians for the sacrifices they make for the orphans. They are visibly blest in their labour, in their persons, in their households, in their harvests. Peace, joy, and honest ease preside at the domestic hearth. Their morals are more pure, their health more flourishing, their children are born more amiable, and with softer and more precocious minds. They give less offence to God, and scandals are almost impossible. In a word—especial graces are bestowed upon their families. Thus, even in this world, our Lord is pleased to render back a hundred fold whatever they do for Him. Our unmarried women reap still greater advantages from their devotedness. We generally assign to them the orphans who are the most ill treated by nature; they find in them an exercise of self-abnegation and mortification, as well as of patience and charity, and thus lay up much merit for another world. These orphans grow up and become a real company of guardian angels who preserve our young girls from the dangers to which their virtue is night and day exposed. On one hand, as all are poor, the maintenance of these orphans demands continual labour which many prolong far into the night, and this banishes idleness and its consequences, and accustoms them to the hard and suffering condition necessary for the followers of Jesus Christ. On the other hand the hearts of our single women attach themselves solely to these children, and thus the natural inconstancy of their affections is strongly fixed, and we no longer fear those defections and scandals which would prove the severest of the Missionary's trials.

I have related to you, Rev. Father, all that I think it useful to communicate in order to complete what you already know of the

Society in the Island of Tsun-min;—nothing more remains but to ask for your blessing and a remembrance in your prayers.

Bourdilleau, S. J.

WESTERN TONG-KING.

From the Rev. Father Paul Puginier, Miss. apost. of the Society of Foreign Missions, to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Jeantet, Vic. apost. of Western Tong-King.

July 28th, 1864.

My Lord Bishop,

I have the honour to forward the report, for which your lordship asked me, of the Holy Childhood in my district. I will first tell you the reasons for which I greatly esteem this Society.

When your lordship sent me hither, you particularly recommended the Society of the Holy Childhood to my notice, and those words found an echo in my heart all the more readily that I have always regarded it as the complement of the Propagation of the Faith. These two societies are in my opinion, sisters who are inseparable, and both of whom are requisite for the perfect administration of a Mission. The Propagation of the Faith, having for its aim the extension of the kingdom of God and the salvation of souls, cannot fail to find in the Holy Childhood great resources for the attainment of this double end. By means of this Society she is enabled to carry the kingdom of God into a great number of pagan families, who not only did not wish to enquire into our holy religion, but who even were its persecutors. It penetrates into the houses of those mandarins who pronounce sentence of death against our Christians. It introduces itself even into the palace of the King, where it has baptised a young aspirant to the throne, deprived by an early death of an earthly crown to inherit one more beautiful in heaven. And though the kingdom of heaven is thus only brought into these pagan families in as it were a temporary manner, that is till the death of the baptised child, yet it remains there as an indelible remembrance that God has been Master. The infant has departed, it is true, but it is exactly by his intercession in heaven that the seed secretly shed in this house will fructify.

The Propagation of the Faith will find no better helpmate in procuring the salvation of souls than the Holy Childhood, which is

daily sending thousands of souls to heaven. The Propagation of the Faith then requires the help of the Holy Childhood for the completion of its work, in the same way that the latter has need of the Propagation of the Faith, as an elder sister who can organize, direct, and enable her to walk. The Propagation of the Faith helps the Holy Childhood, when the child, who having been baptised survives its baptism, has been educated, and is now a grown up Christian, perhaps even a minister of the Lord, who will give lustre to the Church by his virtues. He may even honour her by his glorious martyrdom. The last persecution gave example of this in 2 or 3 young martyr priests, plants gathered from the garden of the Holy Childhood, and ultimately the fruit of all this reverts to the Propagation of the Faith. These are some of the principal reasons which lead me to so high an appreciation of the Society of the Holy Childhood and inspire me with a desire to labour for her with all my power. Besides this, I learned during the few months which I passed with your Lordship, on my arrival in Western Tong-King how high was the esteem in this Mission for the Holy Childhood, and this could not fail to increase my desire to devote myself in an especial manner to its extension.

One of my first cares in taking possession of my district was to establish the Holy Childhood. I was but a young novice in the Apostolate, but I tried to do good according to the means which divine Providence placed in my way. In conformity with your lordship's recommendation I employed persons who came to me in the administration of baptism. I explained the means to be used for making a plentiful harvest of souls, always exercising a zeal which should be discreet, prudent, and conformed to the prescriptions of holy Church, which gives directions respecting the baptisms of little pagans. I explained also to these Christians, the care to be taken of those children who survived their baptism, that they should either purchase, adopt them, or bring them to me that they might when older have the benefit of religious instruction. As to the children whose parents will not consent to part with them, I recommended the baptisers to keep an eye on them; to watch them as they grow up, and exhort them to follow our holy religion when they are older, and to mention them to other Christians of the neighbourhood, that these latter may keep watch over them, should they themselves fail in being able to do so.

But I intended to direct not only the old baptisers, I wished also to increase their number. I therefore endeavoured to form a nucleus of zealous and clever persons entirely devoted to the work of baptising. I gave them my instructions and then sent them abroad, at first in company with others who were broken in to the

work. As soon as they get accustomed to it they separate, and each will go his own way, and make his own harvest.

These persons devote themselves to their work with great zeal and exactitude, and are industrious in finding out where there are children in danger of death. At the end of my letter I shall give you the history of one of these zealous baptisers; but I must say a few words about her pious industry, by way of anticipation. In spite of the great number of children whom she baptises, thinking the amount small when compared with those who are lost, she has formed a kind of secondary machine of which she is herself the principal wheel, directing and giving movement to the whole. She has enrolled her mother and some other fervent Christians, and sends them forth to the work. She has begged some prudent and discreet pagan women to tell her whenever they met with children in danger of death, and whenever they tell her of a dying child, she gives them some pills or other trifles, as a reward, and flies to open heaven to another soul. She has also taught these pagans to baptise as Christians do, but only in cases where there is positively no time to call in one of them. God cannot but bless such enlightened and devoted zeal. By means of this woman and others who work under her direction, there are sometimes more than 200 children a month sent to heaven. I have taken all possible trouble to ascertain her manner of proceeding in the work of baptising, and I find that everything is right, discreet and in conformity with the rules of the church. It is very satisfactory to think that she is not the only one who is thus labouring zealously and with success. Others devote themselves like her to the same cause, and through their labours and those of the old baptisers, I have on my list alone, in the space of one year, more than 9,000 baptisms of children in danger of death, of whom the greater part are already in heaven.

Though by the blessing of God I thus saw the work of baptising prospering in the district which your lordship has given to my superintendence, I was not yet content. I regretted that all those little children, who not being in danger of death could not be regenerated in the saving waters, should be left to grow up amidst the errors of paganism. Amongst them, doubtless, there were souls endowed with many good qualities, who would make excellent Christians. With the desire to save them, I had also a conviction that the endeavour would succeed. I therefore recommended my baptisers to obtain some of these children. It was a first attempt which I wished to make, that I might try the nature of the ground, for I did not dare to ask your lordship's authority for the establishment of a house before being quite sure

of having children to place in it. At the end of a month I had collected a sufficient number to feel certain of the success of the enterprise. It was then I proposed to your lordship the establishment of a house of the Holy Childhood, for the support and instruction of the little adopted pagans. You approved of my design, and gave me great encouragement, making indeed sacrifices which must have been inconvenient to you. Depending on your support, I set about the execution of my plan with good courage. I formed a company of purchasers of little children; I sent them forth on an expedition. I wished to take advantage of a circumstance which was in our favour—the famine—to make an effort beyond our resources, and I have not been disappointed. Many parents not having wherewith to feed their children, willingly consented to get rid of them. To famine has been added the usual accompaniment of pestilence, which has left many orphans, so that at the end of about five months my helpers had collected nearly 300 children, amongst whom were some who were at the breast. For these it was necessary to find wet nurses, but this was not our greatest need. A great many of the children were in a painful state, full of all sorts of diseases. Some of their little bodies had suffered so much that it was difficult to find people charitable enough to take charge of them, even for payment. I wish I could have shown some of them to the associates of the Holy Childhood, they would no doubt have been touched with compassion, and however deformed might be their bodies, at least their souls were beautiful, for they had just been washed in the salutary waters of baptism. Great obstacles were foreseen by many at the beginning of this undertaking, and one of these was the want of nurses. “Do not draw back on this account,” I said to some of our Christians, “find 100 children per day and bring them to me. If God gives us these children, He will give us the means to provide for them.” To facilitate our means for finding nurses I have established four central points, two in my own neighbourhood, and two at a distance of two and three days’ journey. Each of these places includes all the Christian settlements, situate in its immediate locality, and is intended to receive the children who are purchased in the neighbourhood. The people who have the task of superintending these central points are to come once or twice each month to give an account, and I also send one of my catechists from time to time to see that the children are well taken care of, and to examine how things are going on. He has to keep a register containing the name of each child, his country, his age, the name of the person who bought him, that of the baptizer, and of the family to which he is sent for nursing, with the dates. The account for last

month showed 150 children at nurse, nearly 40 at the asylum, without reckoning those who have been adopted by Christian families to whom they have been given. A catechist is placed at the head of the asylum to superintend everything which relates to these establishments, and another has the care of the children's instruction. Most of them have already been baptised or are being prepared for it. They are generally attached to the house and never think of leaving it, which I always thought would be the case with children who had come to the age of reason. Some few who have run away had only been there three or four days, so that there had not been sufficient time to inspire them with the love of religion. Generally speaking, a few days of religious instruction produce a complete change in them. This arrangement renders the direction of the house more easy, and without it it would be difficult for us to retain children who have been accustomed to do their own will, and for whom I have not at my command the external means which are elsewhere employed so successfully in captivating young minds. Our poverty and the impossibility of extending our work, oblige me at first to think only of what is strictly necessary. I regret much that I am often obliged to let my children remain in want of suitable clothing, they have only as much as is indispensable, though of food they have abundance. I mean to economise to the utmost that I may be able to give each child a proper dress, at least for Sundays and festival holidays. How much I long for some nuns from Europe; how useful they would be. I hope, however, that with God's help I shall be able to procure some before many years are over.

Amongst these young plants from the garden of the Holy Childhood, there are some, my Lord Bishop, which seem to have excellent talents and good dispositions. These I shall do my best to cultivate in order that after a year's trial we may be able to admit them to the "*Maison de Dieu*." It is possible that they will become catechists if not priests. Should they do so they will not be the first offshoots of the Holy Childhood raised to the priesthood, for the Mission at Western Tong-King already reckons several.

Since the cessation of the famine the purchase of the children has become more difficult and has decreased. On the other hand, the mortality has been very considerable amongst them as well as amongst the other children. They have been cut down by the pestilence more than grown-up people. I lost more than 100 from the time of the establishment of the Asylum to last month. Seeing this great mortality I asked myself several times whether we hasten their deaths by our purchase of them; but all being well considered I am convinced that out of 100 children, if 20 or 30 die on our

hand, 80 or more would have died had they remained with their parents. When given up to us they are generally weak and sickly, and have been for a long time suffering from hunger. As soon as they fall into our hands they are well taken care of; and if we cannot always save their lives, we at least prolong them by some months instead of shortening them. Were they left to the care of their parents their weakness would daily increase. Your Lordship knows besides that in Tong-king it has always been the case that the greatest number of children who are attacked by small pox, sink under it. This is also the case of other maladies, and it is only the lives of those who have passed through these trials which can be depended upon. We most feel the want of vaccination, and I hope that communication becoming easier, we may be able to re-introduce that benefit formerly brought here by Father Costex, but since then lost. I do not think I have lost any of the children who had already had the small pox. I hope, in spite of difficulties, that by multiplying my springs of action I shall be able to maintain an average of 150 children in my asylum, and with peace, and above all, the blessing of God, I hope to get up to 200.

I observed at the beginning of my letter that the Holy Childhood is a great help to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith; here is a fresh proof of this. Within the last three months 12 persons, forming three or four families have opened their eyes to the light, and have received the grace of baptism, thanks to the Holy Childhood. There are at least four other families who are disposed to receive the same blessing. I have not yet admitted them as catechumens because I wish first to prove their good intentions by giving them trial.

This is the manner in which these conversions have been brought about. When I send forth my fellow-labourers on their expeditions I recommend them also to think on the wants of the elder persons, and they do this with good effect. The families of whom I am speaking had sold me some of their children, and our Lord seems to have made use of them to open the eyes of their parents, for it was after this that they expressed a desire to embrace our holy religion. As they belong to villages which are altogether pagan and it would be difficult for them to shake off their superstitions, I made them come to me, after they had gone through a tolerably long trial. They are instructed, baptised, and confirmed; and once well established in their religious principles, I make use of them for my work if they are likely to be of service to it, or else I place them in Christian settlements where they can gain a living whilst still observing their religion. I have had striking proofs of the sincerity of the conversion of these new Christians. Most of them become

devoted to the Holy Childhood, and have been a great help to me. I give them the care of those infants for whom I have not been able to find nurses, and of those of whom no one else will take charge. And when the pains they take with these poor babes render them clean and healthy, I take them away and replace them by others in the same state in which the former were at first. I am cruel, am I not, my Lord Bishop? but those who established the Sisters of Charity and other orders devoted to the relief of misery were still more cruel than I am. These new Christians, fruits of the Holy Childhood, render their services with willing hearts; they are indeed angels, sent by God to pay back to the Holy Childhood what they have received, and without their aid I should hardly have obtained the results I have gained. All they do is done gratis, for my poverty permits me to give them no other recompense than the white dress on the day of their baptism, which is common to all new made Christians.

Your Lordship will now perhaps fancy that the Society of the Holy Childhood runs on as upon wheels without the least difficulty. This is by no means the case; the evil one looks upon this new establishment with no favourable eye, and has consequently stirred up annoyances. When he saw that we were going to snatch from him even the children who were in no danger of death, and whom he hoped to make his servants, he was irritated and opened his batteries, and gave me battle. The first thing he did was secretly to excite the anger of the Mandarin of the sub-department against the Christian settlement where I live.

This mandarin denounced the village to the prefecture as having a monster church, holding very considerable assemblies, and even occasionally receiving an European. In spite of the peace made between France and the King of Annam, these were decided by the theological mandarin faculty, to be three great crimes. The chiefs of the village were then called to the prefecture, the mandarins got alarmed, and ordered the church to be thrown down. They were content to let alone the house which was presumed to be the residence of a native priest, once a prisoner for the faith, and liberated by the King's order at the conclusion of the peace with France.

Pleased with his exploit, the evil spirit now prepared a second tempest. He again stirred the heart of his servant the mandarin against us, who made another report full of malice and of falsehood, in hope of overthrowing those houses which the first hurricane had left standing. The chiefs of the village were again summoned to the prefecture, there were more threats, with orders to throw down the rest of the houses, or the mandarin would him-

self set them on fire. This famous order was sent to me, and the village was under obligation to carry it into execution. I said, however, to the inhabitants: "Do not throw down the houses just yet; go again to the mandarin, and implore him, and if necessary give him some money." The mandarin allowed himself to be softened, and the three houses which we inhabit remained standing, and do so still. I feel certain that this favour is due to the little angels of the Holy Childhood who have died in this house and have become, as it were, its pillars of strength.

Vanquished on this point, the devil next excited the hatred of one of the chief persons of the village against the Holy Childhood. This man, who is anything but a good Christian, was secretly working against us. When the affair came to my knowledge, I spoke rather strongly, and the annoyances decreased, for it was rather human prudence than malice that urged him to act. This is not the whole of the war which the devil wages with us; he creates want here, difficulties there, but we endeavour to make all smooth and to continue the work with ardour and confidence. This opposition from the evil spirit has not surprised me; I expected it when I took the work in hand. But what can the spirit of evil do against those who have God on their side? Now I believe that God is with me, for I am doing His work, and though I shall still have to struggle, by the power of God the devil will be conquered.

I must now say a few words respecting the zealous baptiser of whom I spoke at the beginning of this letter. Having met with her last year I encouraged her to go about baptising, and gave her some medicines, though her great timidity prevented my hoping much from her. Her simple and lively faith made her look upon my words as a strict obligation. Some time after, enquiring of one of my catechists how she was going on; "Father," he replied, "you have given her an arduous task; she has never been accustomed to go about, and knows literally only her own village, where she lives alone, and gives herself up to prayer and meditation. To do the work of baptising, she is obliged to hire an old woman to guide her; I beg you to dispense her from this labour." "No," I replied to my catechist, "I shall not dispense her; since she has had virtue enough to accept this work and execute it thus, God will bless her labours and she will become one of my best baptisers." At the end of two months she came to me having baptised 6 children who were all already in heaven. This was not much, and yet it was of considerable importance, as she had become acquainted with several villages, and could now go about alone. I gave her great encouragement and pointed out means by which she might obtain still more fruit. She continued her work with new courage continu-

ally finding out fresh devices for saving souls. God specially blessed her good will, for at the end of a short time she had established her work upon the footing I have mentioned above. When I saw her labouring with so much zeal, devotedness and fruit, I wished to know more of her life, which could not but be a holy one and pleasing to God. On questioning her I found she had great love for God, and an ardent desire to increase in this love. This love is founded on a great degree of humility. Not only she does not seek to make known her good deeds, but she has a great dislike to their being known. All her virtues are united with great simplicity and candour, both in her intimate communication with God and also the Blessed Virgin, whom she also loves much. She has often heard as it were a voice at the bottom of her heart exciting her to the love of God. One night when she was intending to communicate on the following day she heard a voice saying to her, "You will communicate to-morrow, and you are about to sleep! rise and make preparation for receiving your God." She immediately got up and remained in prayer till the morning, when she received holy Communion. When the last persecution was at its height her brother became a martyr. When she heard that he was about to be put to death, and there was no priest to give him absolution, she went to him herself to encourage him. She accompanied him to the place of execution, excited him to contrition, prayed with him and for him, and all this in the midst of the soldiers who did not interfere. When arrived at the spot, she once more encouraged her brother to martyrdom, spread the mat upon which the sacrifice was to be completed, and then retiring a step or two, left the executioner to accomplish his work. This truly strong woman remained there as a witness to her brother's faith, and to aid him till his last breath.

The martyrdom consummated, she took the body and head of her brother to inter them as decently as circumstances would allow. Nature and faith were struggling within her: the former beheld a brother put to an unjust and cruel death, but the latter considered him as a martyr, and in this thought she was comforted and strengthened. I asked her how she felt while accompanying her brother, and when she saw him put to death. She replied, "My soul was very sorrowful, but I tried to overcome the bitterness which overflowed it, that I might strengthen and encourage him, and when all was over I retired to weep alone." Such a person cannot fail to bring down blessings on the Holy Childhood for which she has also her trials to sustain. A few months ago, when the pestilence was raging, I sent her to Nam-dinh to employ herself both in baptising and purchasing infants. She bought about 40, and took some of them

to her village to find nurses for them. Some of them unfortunately died as other children of the village had done. The pagans were angry with her, accusing her quite wrongfully of having introduced the pestilence amongst them, and went in search of her to punish her. She was obliged to go away for a time to escape the persecution of these bad people, but this trial did not discourage her. She continued her work with as much zeal and ardour as before. Her humility even led her to conceal this occasion of merit, and it was only from other persons who knew her well, that we heard of it. If her life is preserved and her zeal continues, as I hope will be the case, she will be a great help to the Holy Childhood as well by her prayers as her actions.

Here is an anecdote, which without being anything very wonderful, shows how God sometimes uses extraordinary means for saving the souls He desires to draw to Himself.

Your Lordship is aware that the pagans are through a superstitious notion, sometimes convinced that they will not be able to bring up such or such children, because the fates have told them so. Under these circumstances they sell them, forsake them, and sometimes even get rid of them by destroying them. Amongst my children in the asylum there are at the least two or three who prove this statement, for their mothers were about to put them to death when they were saved by some Christians, who begged to be allowed to adopt them. A pagan then having lost one of her children consulted the fates to know what would happen to one who was still at the breast. The answer was not favourable; the child would sooner or later be killed by the bad spirit. The woman then sold the child, meaning thereby to deceive the evil spirit, who would not know where he was. At the end of a few days she repurchased him, and brought him home secretly. She sold him a second time, and again brought him back. She was to do so three times, after which the evil spirit having lost sight of the child would not know where to find him, and it was by this means alone that he could live. The two first times she sold him to pagans who allowed her to repurchase him, but the third time it was God's will that she should sell him to a Christian of the village where I am living. This woman brought him to me the next day, quite joyful at what she considered a good deed. She confessed having told an untruth, that they might not know that the purchase had been made for me. She added, "the mother had asked from what village I came, in order that she might come and visit the child, but I gave her a wrong name." She did not suspect that the mother made this enquiry to enable her to find her son and repurchase him a third time. Her intention was only to conceal the circumstance that I was in the village, which

might have been suspected by the purchase of so large a number of children. I immediately baptised this child and sent him to nurse at a distance for fear that the evil one might excite the mother to make disturbances in endeavouring to regain her child. A day or two after she was indeed in search of him, but this time with no success.

I have still some interesting anecdotes left, but my report is already sufficiently long. Yet as it is the first I have had the honour to address to your lordship on the subject of the Holy Childhood in my district, I have thought it right to give you full details of the means employed for the progress of the Society, the result we have obtained, and of our hope of still greater success, if the Central Committee will come generously to our aid. Let them give us £5,000 my lord, and I engage that we shall find means to employ them with good effect.

I have the honour to be, my lord, with the greatest respect and devotion, your very humble servant and colleague,

Paul Puginier, Miss. Apost.

INDIA.—MISSION OF PONDICHERRY.

Extracts from a letter from the Rev. Father Bergez, Miss. of the Soc. of Foreign Missions, to the Right Rev. Dr. Godelle, Vicar Apos. of Pondicherry.

Combaconam, 10th Aug. 1865.

My lord Bishop,

I am going to try and complete the information already transmitted to your lordship, as to the struggles which have been maintained by our dear little Devassagazan, (Lazarus), his perseverance and his victory.

Arounasalam (Lazarus's pagan name) began to frequent one of the schools of the Holy Childhood, established at Pratacondy, not far from his parents' village, at the age of nine years. He was soon remarkable not only for his aptness at his studies, his exactness to all his duties, and his perfect obedience, but above all for a great desire for the truth. It was his delight to carry off the books of his Christian schoolfellows, to read them, and taste the sweet teaching of our holy religion. His love for the Priest, his attraction to the Church, and many other indications showed the inclination of

his heart; which soon, opening more and more to the divine light which illuminated it, poured itself out at the feet of the priest. If he could not then obtain the grace of Baptism, he at least broke with all the customs of paganism, and many violent reproaches and severe punishments he had to endure on this account.

A mysterious dream, I dare not call it a vision, tended to strengthen the boy's desires. Your lordship knows the veneration in which the tomb of the Rev. Father Legout is held by the people of these countries. The first confidence of our child had been given to the holy Missionary, and so from the time of his death he never failed to go and make a prayer on his grave, each day, in going to and returning from school.

One night, when asleep, he saw Father Legout going through the streets of the village, and knocking at the doors, till he stopped before his and said, "Well, are you converted?" (literally, Has the Good Spirit come to you?) Arounasalam astonished, was silent. He then saw the Father leave the house, continue to go through the streets, knocking at the doors, and then come back to him with the same question: "Well has the Good Spirit come to you?" "He is come," said the child. "Then," added the Father, "you shall be called Lazarus. Fear not; you will have trials and persecutions to endure: but do not be discouraged, remember your immortal soul, and that your name is henceforth Lazarus." The apparition then vanished.

In the morning, before returning to school, the happy child related his secret in confidence to one of his pagan schoolfellows; the father of this boy, who was sleeping near, had listened to the conversation of the two boys, and it was this pagan who, after its fulfilment, related this mysterious dream to which, at the time, he attached no more importance than to any other.

From this day Arounasalam had but one thought—he must receive baptism at any cost. He foresaw many obstacles, but heaven, which had foretold them, would be sure to remove them. On the 12th March, 1865, he went resolutely to Father Selvanader, Vicar of Pratacondy, to beg the favour of being admitted into the number of catechumens. This Father, who was only lately arrived, seeing so young a man and knowing nothing of his antecedents, advised him to wait for the return of Father Beisard, the first Missionary of the district. But this return might be delayed too long for the ardent convert. Two days later he returned at night. "Father," said he, "I am aware that you do not know me, but Fr. Rieucan, Missionary of Candamangalam, who was formerly here, is well acquainted with me. I am going to ask him to baptise me; only give me a letter, that he may not fancy that I have been driven

away by my parents." Having said this he returned home, immediately made up his little bundle, and whilst all his family were asleep, fearing neither the darkness of the night nor a journey of twenty miles, he set out for Candamangalam. Here his first trial awaited him, for Fr. Rieucan had gone to take charge of another Christian settlement, 5 miles distant. He arrived a 11 o'clock in the morning, and having, remained only long enough to take a little food and to rest after his fatigues, our courageous youth set out again the following evening to find Fr. Rieucan. He arrived at midnight, and in the joy of attaining the object of his wishes he forgot all his fatigues. He seemed to touch the gate of heaven since he was at the feet of him who was to regenerate his soul in the saving waters of baptism. But these divine waters flow from the foot of the Cross, and our Lord was there waiting to open for him the way of trial. It began the next day. The boy's father arrived, entered suddenly into the room, and seizing his son, wished to drag him away. The child first grasped a table, then a bed, then a box, then the bar of a window, and after a long struggle, the father, unable to succeed, had recourse to more dangerous weapons. He addressed himself to his son's heart in the most tender and affectionate words. The child resisted cunning as he had done violence, and came forth victorious from this first attack.

The next day it was the mother's turn. She arrived accompanied by several relations. Dishevelled, and with lamentable cries, she called her son. "My child, my child, the apple of my eye! I must see my child!" In the mean time Arounasalam, hidden in a corner, was praying at the foot of a crucifix, and for more than a quarter of an hour he remained thus in spite of the cries of his mother, and the natural distress of his own heart. He then tried to pacify his mother without showing himself, upon which the other relations joined in and endeavoured to gain his heart, by the most tender and touching words, speaking of their affection and kind intentions, and saying that they did not wish to take him away, but only to see him and speak with him. He answered, "You are wonderful men, models of truth. What was it you said as you were coming?" "Nothing, that we know of." "Nothing! you said, Yes, we will call the little rogue in a friendly manner, and when we have once got him out we will carry him to the village, and then after having half strangled him, and given him plenty of blows, we shall find no difficulty in making him forget the religion of Jesus. If he is obstinate, we will get rid of him in one way or another. Tell me, is not this the manner in which you talked on the road?" At these words they were astounded, and knew not what to reply; they were struck with fear and asked each other how he came to

know what they had spoken of only amongst themselves. This trick having failed, the mother began again to utter piercing cries, pronounce maledictions and invoke Sinen, Peroumal, and the rest of her false gods, whilst the boy gently replied, "Oh, my mother! will these false gods take you to heaven? why will you go with them to hell?" The Missionary having arrived, the parents asked if they could take away their child. He replied that they might if the child consented to follow them, and advised them not to ill-treat him, to show him affection, and to see if they could induce him to go away with them. On their promising all this the boy came to them, but betraying the confidence which had been placed in them, they immediately threw themselves upon him, and you may now figure to yourself this poor lamb, struggling in the grasp of four furious wolves. One took his hands, another his feet, two others lifted him up, and they set off at a run. The boy cried out with all his might and called for help against this violence so loudly and so well, that a crowd assembled. The mayor of the village arrived, and having witnessed the violence done to the boy ordered him to be set at liberty; but as he was a pagan, and far from desiring to favour the conversion of the child, he took the matter into his own hands, hoping that he should be able to persuade him to return to his parents. For more than an hour he continued his arguments; the boy, enlightened by grace, made such just and striking replies to all his proposals, that every one was in admiration. At last, when a thousand arguments had been again and again refuted, he once more had recourse to the mother's despair. "But why should my mother despair because I come to the true God? did she bring me into the world then for hell?" "But," replied the mayor, "how can you live without either father or mother?" "I do not forsake any father or mother; they must follow me to the Christian religion. If they reject me I have in heaven God for my Father, and Mary for my mother." As the mayor wished to continue, the boy became impatient, and exclaimed, "wretched man, will you go away? What! have you only rescued me from the hands of these pagans to throw me into the power of the evil one? Let me alone, for I shall answer you no more." After this the mayor was obliged to retire in confusion.

After the departure of the relations there were a few days of calm which were employed in preparing this generous catechumen for the grace of baptism, which it seemed no longer just to refuse him. On baptising him, on the 22nd of March, Father Rieucan, not knowing that a name had already been assigned to the boy by another missionary, and ignorant also of the mysterious dream of which we have spoken, but recollecting the struggles undergone by Lazarus the

martyr in this country, asked the child if he remembered to have read his history. "O yes, Father, I have read the story of his combats with admiration." "Well, you shall bear his name, and may God give you the strength and perseverance with which He formerly inspired this illustrious Christian!" And thus was the child's dream fulfilled.

The day following he made his first Communion; the bread of the strong came to fortify his young soul and prepare it for new combats soon to follow. That very day his parents returned to the charge, and on this occasion they brought with them the catechist who had been his former school-master, and other Christians, who came thus that they might show by their outward conduct, that the resolution of the child was not a consequence of their intrigues.

They had hardly arrived when the catechist called our neophyte by his old pagan name of Arounasalam; twice he made his appeal and yet the boy remained silent. "How is it, you impolite little fellow," said the catechist, "that I have called you twice and you make no answer?" "The reason is that my name is no longer Arounasalam but Lazarus. I no longer acknowledge this pagan name." The catechist then tried to induce him to comply with the wishes of his parents. The child then unable to understand what was passing, cried out, "My God, my God! what does this mean? even my master, he who taught me my religion, comes to tell me that I must return to idolatry! Well, so be it: let all the world be against me, Thou, O my God, wilt remain to me and the missionary also."

The relations seeing that they had no chance of success by these means, went in all directions in search of the police. But the devil was again defeated, for one man replied that in a case of this kind his power did not extend to Europeans, and the other agent of the police, who hastened to their appeal, was satisfied with taking note of the boy's protestations, and declared that he could not oblige him to go away against his will.

Having returned to their village, resolved to attain their ends, the relations had recourse to a new stratagem. They went to Father Beisard, the missionary at Pratacondy, and addressing him in words apparently most pacific, only begged him to send for the boy himself in order that his relations might have the comfort of seeing him now and then, at the same time, promising not to annoy him but to leave him quietly at the Presbytery. Upon these fine promises Father Beisard begged Father Rieucan to send him his neophyte. No one can tell what it cost our boy to quit his father in Jesus Christ, and to go and put himself as it were

within reach of the very mouths of the wolves who wished to devour him. It was hard to persuade him, but at last obedience triumphed.

The precautions which had happily been taken caused a scheme of the relations for carrying him away on the road to fail of its accomplishment, but they had no sooner arrived at the Presbytery at Pratacondy, than the scenes of tumult, cries, clamour, and violence recommenced. An agent of the police whom they had brought as a support, seeing the poor lamb who was crying out under their grasp, "Help! help! they are going to murder me," was obliged to interfere, and to cut matters short he obliged them to put him down and took him to his own house. As he was a pagan, he exhausted in his turn all his arguments to persuade him to return to his own family. Finding his endeavours useless, he referred him the next day to his superior, who did his best with as little success as the others. After all these trials it will be asked if our neophyte was not at last at the end of his troubles. Alas! no. This man sent the child to the Dassildar of Trichinopoly—a native magistrate.

He might as well have been given up to the devil in person. This pagan magistrate, roused to iniquity, no sooner heard the history of our courageous neophyte than, abusing the power which rested in him, he determined to force him to renounce the faith by every means in his power, and without any regard either to his age or the claims of justice, threw him at once into prison. Our young confessor, he was only thirteen, though mixing with highway robbers, took all patiently, and though the pain of hunger was soon added to the horrors of imprisonment, was even joyful in his dungeon. It was not that the necessaries of life were withheld, but he had determined, come what might, to refrain from touching the food brought by his relatives, as he knew magical preparations would be mixed with it, much less would he eat the rice offered in the pagoda, which was sent him by the Dassildar. He thus passed the first three days of his seclusion without taking anything but a little water, and when the companions of his captivity enquired the reason of this long fast, he replied that he was keeping jubilee. Our Lord then came to his aid in an extraordinary manner. In the night he heard a strange noise, as if something fell upon him from above. He felt about in the darkness, and the something which had fallen on him seeming good to eat, he tasted it. All that he could say about it was that this food was delicious, new to him, and that he felt that it was a present from God. He ate a part of it and returning thanks to God, reserved a little for the next day, but at day-break, when he wanted this, he could find

only some dry leaves, God no doubt intending to teach him in this manner that he must confide in Him without care for the morrow, and, in fact, from this day forward, a Christian undertook to supply him with food. All this time the wicked magistrate was labouring at the perversion of Lazarus; he gave his relations full liberty to enter the prison and do all they could to shake his faith, and he himself took him several times to the pagoda, and urged him to salute the idols. Each time however he had the shame of seeing the courageous confessor throw a look of disdain at these images, and turning his back on them make a great sign of the cross. Seeing all his efforts vain against so firm a faith, he resolved to revenge himself on the missionaries. He issued an order of arrest against Father Rieucan, accused him of carrying off a minor, and against Father Silvanader, his servant and his catechist, accused of having aided in this.

I will not stop to tell you how the Rev. Father Rieucan was brutally seized by the collar by one of the emissaries of the police, and dragged along the road like a criminal, was then thrown into prison, and with great difficulty obtained his liberty after a day of detention, with a caution that he was not to leave the village, nor will I tell you of the triumph of the pagans and the confusion of our Christians at the sight of our colleagues thus arrested and treated as criminals. To speak only of our neophyte—the Dassildar at the same time that he issued the mandate of arrest against our priests, by an infamous tactic, delivered the child into the hands of his parents, hoping that they would succeed in making him apostatize, and give evidence against our colleagues. But God was on our side, and so are also the prayers of the thousands of little children who are enrolled under the banner of the Holy Childhood. The Lord Jesus watched over Lazarus and our accused ones.

Lazarus had hardly arrived at his parents, when they wanted to make him take off his Rosary. To this he replied with energy, "The Rosary will only fall from my neck when you take off my head." After a time they succeeded in taking away the Rosary by force, and it was broken in pieces. Then he said calmly, "You have taken away the Rosary which I had round my neck, but I have another at the bottom of my heart and that you cannot take away." They tried charms and magical preparations, and he was subjected to a grand ceremony, the object of which was to efface the character of baptism. This ceremony consists chiefly in playing a great many absurd tricks, during which they rub the head of the patient with citrons, and wash it with a deluge of water. Our brave boy laughed and joked the whole time, crying out, "As to hindering me from being a Christian, you may as well banish such

a dream; but rub away, pour plenty of water; living in the prison has heated me much and a bath is very refreshing." When the citrons were all used, the pitchers empty, and the prescriptions all applied; "There," cried he, "see! you have effaced it all," and saying this he made a great sign of the cross, and begun saying his prayers aloud, showing that neither remedies, charms, magic, nor all the stores of the devil could avail against his faith.

In the questions which were put to him during the course of the process, and by which they tried to take him by surprise, and make him say something which might seem as an accusation against the Fathers, it was impossible not to admire his firmness and prudence. He always protested against the calumnies invented by his parents, declaring energetically that he had acted with perfect freedom, and adding that what violence he had to complain of was on the part of his parents. He replied to every question at the tribunal by such correct expressions, with such an accent of conviction, and in a manner so far beyond his age, that the words of our Lord were clearly verified in him. "But when they shall deliver you, take no thought how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak."

You know, my lord Bishop, how by God's grace all ended well for the accused. They were set free. Our dear neophyte alone obtained not the liberty which he desired. He was made over to his parents. During some days which he passed in his own family, he was subjected to great oppression and persecution and to many charms; but the month of Mary was to be the month of his deliverance; Mary! the comforter of the afflicted. On the first of May, at midnight, this dear child again furtively quitted the paternal dwelling, went to gather strength by prayer at the tomb of Father Legout, and took the road to Trichinopoly. Thence directing his steps to Negapatam and Kankal, he at last arrived happily at your Lordship's residence, and you fulfilled his wishes by placing him in the little seminary. In this pious establishment God will no doubt preserve and develop in his soul the virtues which have hitherto called forth our admiration.

Since the departure of Lazarus, we have seen the vengeance of divine providence overtake his persecutors. The English Government not only disapproved the conduct of Dassildar, but has deprived him of his employment and degraded him to an inferior situation. The police agent, who showed such brutality in the arrest of Father Rieucan, was for other misdemeanors, first degraded, then brought before the tribunal, and finally condemned to some months imprisonment. The pagans who were concerned in

the suit against our colleagues, are now involved in a process by their own friends.

Deign, my Lord Bishop, to grant your blessing to your obedient son in Jesus and Mary,

J. Bergez, Miss. Apost.

AFRICA.—MISSION OF MADAGASCAR.

From the Rev. Father Lacomme, S. J. Missionary, to the Director of the Holy Childhood.

St. Mary of Madagascar, Mar. 7th. 1865.

Reverend Sir,

When I see India, Tonquin, Cochinchina, China especially, and other Missions, supplying the Holy Childhood with letters both interesting and edifying, it appears to me that Madagascar ought also to pay its little tribute; for here also there are unfortunate children,—children to be baptised, children to be brought up, children to be snatched from the grasp of the pitiless enemy of mankind, who in his rage, seeks, above all, for innocent hearts to devour. But I am also induced by a feeling of duty to write this letter. You interest yourself about our work, and it is therefore right that you should know any particulars which may have an interest in your eyes. I wish to speak of our little mission of St. Mary of Madagascar.

For some time past there has been an evident inclination towards our holy religion, not very much, to say the truth, amongst the grown-up persons, but amongst the young of all ages. We are thankful to be able to assert this. This is no doubt the result of 25 years of patient labour on the part of the Missionaries who, during all that time never ceased to shed this good seed upon the earth; but it is also the immediate effect of the catechising which takes place regularly twice a week, thanks to the solicitude of the commandant of the isle, whose concurrence greatly facilitates this work. Most of the children of St. Mary come in this manner to receive religious instruction, though it is at first with the greatest indifference and without any intention of becoming Christians, just as little children in France go to school without troubling themselves to learn much. They go because they must, but by degrees their ideas develop, the communication they have with the Fathers renders them less timid, and they become a little civilized. Then they learn that there is a heaven for the good and a hell for the wicked. These truths, which insensibly affect their

minds produce an impression, and thus after having learnt the catechism for a certain time, their thoughts and their manner of seeing things are considerably modified without their having been aware of it. When at certain intervals, the Father who instructs them makes a list of those who have been most assiduous in their attendance at catechism, and invites them to receive direct instruction for baptism, it is rarely that they do not all come. There are even some who present themselves of their own accord, and others are brought by their parents, who whilst refusing for themselves, are either glad that their children should become Christians, or at least have no difficulty in allowing it.

At this moment more than 70 are preparing for baptism. It is a matter of course that during the whole of the time of this preparation we have to find them lodging and maintenance. We have found no difficulty in doing this, thanks to the generosity of our worthy commandant, who interests himself much in this work. When the day arrives we have to dress them, and that not in the Malgache fashion but in that of Europe; that is, a gown for the young girls, pantaloons and a blouse for the boys. We could not do less, and they are all much pleased with their new uniform, and present themselves with great modesty to the ceremony of their regeneration.

Last year we baptised more than 220 children of both sexes, and from 8 to 15 years of age. I am not speaking of those who have passed that age. They belong to another class. And now with your permission, I shall enter into some details as to the early manners and Christian education of these children.

EARLY YEARS.—The Malgaches are fond of their children, and behave well to all who are attached to them by any tie of relationship. It is therefore seldom that they destroy or forsake them, at least when they have attained a certain age. Yet it seems certain that this cruel custom does exist amongst them. We have with us here a child who was on the point of becoming a victim to it. He had cost his mother her life, she died two days after his birth, and according to custom he was not to survive her—he must accompany her to the tomb. Happily his father was more humane than the others. He opposed them, and requested as a favour that the child should be left with him. This was granted, and he succeeded in saving him. It would have been a most sad pity had he perished, for his natural disposition is excellent, and he is very good. I assure you he thanks God with all his heart for having preserved him to become a Christian.

I know a little girl who is an idiot. Her sad state makes her mother very unhappy, yet she loves her pretty well. The

Malgache not understanding the different systems of phrenology, cannot imagine this defect to be caused by bodily organization, but attribute it simply to the evil spirit; to some malign influence from which the afflicted person can be freed. Accordingly the manner in which they proceed is this: the relations and friends of the child, no doubt invited by the parents, assemble in the house, and forming a circle, they place the little child in the midst and begin to conjure, or rather to frighten away the evil spirit. Then all strike the walls with their elbows and clapping their hands in cadence, whilst uttering words which they probably little comprehend. I do not know how long the ceremony lasts. Most likely till they are all tired. They then open the door hoping to see the *angath*, which had been the cause of the evil, escaping. This was done with the little girl in question; but no spirit departed, and they had the sorrow of finding the little girl as idiotic as before.

The parents bring up their children; that is they feed them and keep them with them; for as to education, they give them none. As to morals, the utmost they do I believe is, to tell them sometimes not to steal. Christianity has everything to do, all to build up amongst them.

CATECHISM.—Catechism takes place at 4 o'clock on Saturday evening, and on Sunday after Mass, and is obligatory upon all the children of the isle. They arrive in groups, sometimes coming from a great distance, and carrying not food and bed clothing, which, as well as lodging, they are sure to find here, but merely a mat to sleep upon, a cane to suck, and their Sunday clothes on. They come bareheaded and chattering away, till they have entered the Church for Mass. As our island is long, and all the children cannot easily get to our residence, which is towards the south, we have formed a second district called Saha-sifath. One of us goes every Sunday to say Mass for them and instruct them. Catechism lasts at least two hours: but the time is so varied by prayers, songs, and recitation, that the Malgaches who are naturally patient, do not find it too long. I wish, Rev. Sir, that you could hear them repeating their lessons or saying their prayers altogether. You would be edified and see that our children know their catechism and recite their prayers well. It would be necessary however to enter without noise, for you would be quite sure to attract the curious regard of many amongst them who are still too young to have yet learned that no head should be turned in church. They will learn this and many other things by degrees; for these children have not imbibed the truths of our religion from their earliest years, and it is with labour and difficulty that we succeed in implanting them in their hearts. Still we are fortunate

in having young plants to cultivate which are easily tended; it is quite a different thing with elder persons who can hardly be brought to any kind of comprehension of the spirituality of our religion.

IMMEDIATE PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM.—When the proper time is come, the Father who is specially charged with their instruction, makes a direct appeal to the children, choosing those who have merited the favour by their assiduity at catechism. On the day mentioned they are sure to arrive, sometimes even in greater number than was desired. Some of those who were not named come with the others begging to be admitted.

The preparation is a sort of retreat which lasts a month, 5, or 6 weeks. This is an efficacious way of instructing them and trying their willingness and constancy. They assemble in the Church four times a day, to learn catechism and prayers, and to hear instructions upon baptism, the ceremonies of which are explained to them. Each meeting lasts two hours, which is a hard trial for children; and yet it is rarely that any one draws back or looks behind. Their great fear is not to be admitted to the examination, and great is the sorrow of those who, for some reason or other, have their baptism postponed. I have seen them weep bitterly, and throw themselves at the Father's feet, imploring him not to defer their baptism. Yet the heart must sometimes be closed to the pity inspired by these scenes of distress. The three last days are passed in retreat, properly so called, but proportioned to the age and intelligence of the children.

BAPTISM OF YOUNG ADULTS.—Saturday, or the eve of some feast, is the day we generally choose for this ceremony. If you were to come to the church on this day at 2 o'clock, you would be surprised. You would see to the right a range of boys, to the left a range of little girls, all modest and well dressed. You would hardly recognize them, for when you saw them in the morning they were ill clothed, half naked, and covered only with rags. They were then shy, ashamed and awkward, shewing in their countenances their sad state of poverty, whilst now you see them well dressed and joyous. The expression of their countenances has changed with their uniform. It is edifying to see them, quite recollected, by the side of their godfather and godmother, waiting till the moment of the administering of the holy sacrament of baptism has arrived.

It is very striking to hear the tone in which they answer the question made them, according to the ritual, and to observe the uniformity with which they make the different movements which form a part of the ceremony. It must be acknowledged, however, that the gravity of these young adults is sometimes at fault, and

this arises when some elderly man or woman who is in their ranks does not properly follow the movements, but rises when it is time to sit down, sits down when it is time to kneel; answers *no* instead of *yes*, or presents the head when it ought to be the back, and so on. They are not much in fault, poor old people, if they make such mistakes, nor must we be too hard upon the levity of childhood; it is only an episode; immediately afterwards you see them grave and recollected, approaching the baptismal font one after another, and supported by the godfather and godmother, receiving on their foreheads the holy waters of baptism. Then the bell sounds its most joyful tones to announce that the Church has just gained new members, Jesus Christ new brothers, and God new children.

EFFECTS OF BAPTISM.—It is not in vain that the regenerating Sacrament has come to these young souls to purify them and place in them the germs of eternal life. It is really surprising to see the change even in appearance which has been worked in these newly baptised children. Before baptism they were suspicious and fearful, and hardly dared to salute us; and they bore upon them, as it were, the seal of that fatal indifference which is natural to their race. They were branches without life. Now that they feel the sap of Christianity circulating in their members, they are quite at ease with us: so far from running away as we approach, they come towards us, and they understand that they have now the same rights as ourselves in the heritage of Jesus Christ, and were it not for their colour and native physiognomy, they might be taken for European children, born, nourished, and brought up in the arms of Christianity. Such is the power of our holy religion; it refines, civilises, and polishes the most rugged natures.

Young Children and Infants.—I have so far only spoken of the children above eight years old, who form a very interesting portion of our young family. Permit me now to speak about another class, no less interesting, the children and infants below that age. This is another victory of Christianity over the Malgache element, which is being gradually undermined, and which will in time disappear. Baptism was feared formerly, because the sorcerers of the country, whose authority has always been great amongst the Malgaches, foretold all sorts of ills to those who received it. This was quite enough to estrange from us a people who are much attached to this life. This prejudice has now almost entirely disappeared, thanks partly to circumstances which have shown that baptism is no cause of death, and partly to the good dispositions of those who have ventured to receive it.

About a year ago, a cruel epidemic made much havoc amongst children, who were carried away by it in great numbers every day.

It was pitiable to see the poor little things struggling in their terrible convulsions; but it was still more sad so see them perish eternally because their parents refused even then to open for them the gates of heaven. Father Galtier went indeed into the villages to try if he could save any of these children, but they were concealed from him, and it was only by their cries, and smothered sounds that he sometimes discovered them. He would then enter the house, and by dint of entreaties he sometimes got permission to baptise these children dying or dangerously ill. When the scourge had passed away it was found that several of these baptised children had not died. They were then taken to the church to complete the ceremonies of baptism, the parents made no objection, but on the contrary went with them and promised that they should be brought up in a Christian manner. These were the first infant baptisms, but others soon took place, the little brothers, sisters, cousins, or friends of the young adults whom we had baptised, being also presented to us. Anxious that those they love should participate in this grace, these elder children generally show great zeal for it, and are happy to be godfather or godmother in their turn. Hence arose a second baptism for infants, more numerous than the last. In proportion to the increase of the baptisms of adults become the number of infants. On the 20th of December we had baptised 38 in one ceremony and a few days afterwards more than 60. No doubt the infant Jesus calls them around His cradle. He may well bless them and smile upon them from His crib, for like Himself, they are poor and covered with rags. In short, during the year 1864 we baptised more than 200, without reckoning the 72 whom we regenerated the day of the Circumcision, nor those born of Christian parents. May our Lord to Whom we have offered them preserve them all to everlasting life.

Baptism of Infants.—I feel sure that you have never witnessed so pious and charming a scene as that of the ceremony of baptising young Malgache children. I am incompetent to describe it.

First comes the distribution of little white relics. Never was this relic, the emblem of innocence, better deserved, and never was it more required, for our Malgaches are generally poor. Happy if the mothers themselves have a common dress, they take little trouble about that of their children. An old *mantle*, a piece of rag, is generally enough. In this state the mothers present them to us. But in a moment a great change has taken place. They look well in their clean white robes. The mothers themselves can hardly recognize them and appear to envy their fate.

When the solemn moment has come it is not an easy affair to arrange and place all this little people. It is of no use to think

of separating them from their mothers, a soldier would not succeed in this. She must either have them in her arms, on her knees, on her back, or hold them by the hand; I have seen mothers present three at a time. Nor is it possible to obtain as much silence as is desirable at such a moment. The mothers make more noise in silencing their children than the little ones do by their cries, their tears or by their songs, each according to his age or the feeling which influences him. It is a concert which it is impossible to describe, but which should make no unpleasant impression when we think that such no doubt were the children who once sought to approach our Lord. Could we possibly repulse them—shut them out? Jesus Christ would Himself have cried to us from the Tabernacle, “Suffer the little children to come to Me. Do you not know that the kingdom of heaven is for such as are like to them?” Happy children! may they one day know the love which our Lord has for them.

I will mention, Rev. Sir, some other scenes which take place during the august ceremony, and which are not surprising amongst these little people. For instance, there are some who have to be held by force, or to be caught whilst running away in alarm at preparations which are quite strange to them. From others we have to take their little playthings and to give them confidence by petting them. Some of them have to be torn from the maternal arms, not without their shedding many tears. But there are others who are so good and enter so completely into the different ceremonies of Baptism that you would think they had some understanding of the great action of which they are the objects. Thus I have little boys and girls of four or five years old, who bend their heads at the proper time, unfasten their little dresses and offer their chests and backs for the holy oil. A grown-up person could not have done better. I have seen even younger children take the candle offered them, with the best grace in the world, and some have even taken such complete possession of it that they would hardly let it go when it was the time to give it up—and a thousand other things which it would take too long to relate.

The ceremony was long and fatiguing both to the children and their parents. After this it seemed right, after the example of our Lord, to repair their exhausted strength, and of this they were well aware, for as they came from the Church they joined themselves into a sort of procession, and directed their steps towards the house of the Fathers. They knew very well that a warm beverage would pass down their ranks, of which father and mother, godfather and godmother would, after the child, have a right to partake.

When all had drank they retired with doubtless a pleasant recollection of this happy day.

Perseverance.—But after this what is to become of all these children? What will become of the young adults? What shall we do with the little nurslings? Have we competent persons to whom to confide them? or shall we have to follow them ourselves and keep a constant guard over them? You may wish to know what we do in this regard, Rev. Sir, I will tell you in a few words.

As the two schools can only receive a limited number of boys and girls, we endeavour to place the children under the care of their godfather or godmother or of some other confidential person; but we generally leave them with their parents, for as I have said our Betsemitsarakas are very fond of their children though they love them with the natural love which is more hurtful than useful to their souls. Yet there is nothing to fear from the spirit of seduction, for the Malgaches are too indifferent to have any desire to proselytise and they make no opposition to their children after being baptised continuing to follow our holy religion. Our great point is not to lose sight of them, and carefully to preserve the rights which we have acquired over them by their Baptism.

As soon as they are inscribed in the ranks of the Faithful, all those who are old enough have to come regularly to catechism and Mass on Sundays. Fr. Galtier calls them over and each child has to answer by the French word *present*. If sometimes there is no reply, the case is not passed over in silence, the reason of his absence must be known, and a catechist is sent to enquire. When they are ill the Father is informed and he goes to see them taking help if needed. We take all the care we can of them, we recommend them to their own relations or to others, and should we hear of anything on their part which is not as it should be, we send for them and reprimand them. On every occasion we shew an interest in them.

But the dresses are a great point with them. What we give them at Baptism we take care to advise them to keep for Sundays. The Sundays however in the end wear them out, and we have then to think of renewing them, for our young Malgaches have their self-love, and this might lead them to forgetfulness of their duty. So when you hear that Julian or Olympia, formerly so attentive, have not come to Mass on Sunday, you may imagine illness, bad weather, absence or any other hindrance you please, but generally speaking it is that this boy or girl have no longer any tidy dress to put on.

They would blush to come in this condition, into the assembly

of Christians where their brethren are so modestly, sometimes even elegantly dressed; and the end of it is that we have to give the new dress which their poverty will not allow them to buy. And here alms are very well bestowed. What European child of eight, ten, twelve, or fifteen years of age seeing them in this sad condition would not willingly give one of the best of his everyday dresses? It is a matter of regret when we sometimes see in an assembly of pagan children, some Christians who are merely distinguished from them by the medal or rosary suspended from the neck, but who for want of any fixed time for receiving a new dress, are obliged to return to this primitive one. And yet these children have the same heavenly Father as the dear children in Europe who are always so well dressed on Sundays and holidays.

I need not tell you, Rev. Sir, that we are obliged to restrict our benefits and to measure our generosity by our resources. We do what we can; and as to the rest we depend upon Him whose Providence feeds the birds of the air and clothes so magnificently the flowers of the field. We regret our inability, because our rights over these children are in proportion to the good we do them, the parents willingly consenting to yield us a share in their paternity and permitting us to do the same good to their souls which we do to their bodies. We shall require greater resources than usual this year, because the whole Isle of St. Mary has been ravaged by a terrible hurricane. The like cannot be remembered; out of 2,000 huts, 1800 were destroyed in the course of a few hours. Whole villages were swept away by the sea, but happily whilst chastising us with one arm God protected the life of man with the other, for with the exception of two sick people who could not be saved in time, not a person, not even the smallest infant perished. It was in the night of the 11th Nov. that this disastrous storm fell upon our isle.

Society of the Holy Childhood.—I cannot pass in silence over a subject which will interest you. We have also our little associates of the Holy Childhood who give their pennies with tolerable punctuality, and which falling from their little hands has reached the modest sum of £4, though I must own that to attain this amount they have had need of the help of European children of larger fortune than themselves. One of our contributors deserves honourable mention as you will think yourself. He is a poor workman, the father of three children who can hardly earn a living, yet in spite of this the very day that he receives his pay there is nothing he is so anxious about as to bring me, without fail, his little offering of $\frac{1}{3}$ d per month. On the first

day of the year I therefore gave him the most beautiful of my too small collection of the Holy Childhood pictures.

Such, Rev. Sir, is the sketch which I feel I ought to give you of our Mission as regards the Holy Childhood. Another time I may be able to tell you of what we are doing to prepare our young adults for the Sacraments of Penance and holy Eucharist, as also of our celebrations of the feasts of the Holy Childhood, which we keep in order to unite all the baptised children.

And now, to be just and finish my letter as I ought, I must tell you that if, thanks to God, we are doing some good at St. Mary; we are much aided in this by the kindness of our worthy commandant M. De la Grouge, an officer of the imperial navy, to whose assistance we owe the means to keep up our work. He hopes to endow the little people whom he governs with a true civilization, and he knows well that this civilization is only to be found in Christianity. We are deeply grateful to him for what he does for the Mission.

Accept, Rev. Sir, the assurance of my most respectful and devoted sentiments,

S. Lacomme, S. J.

Miss. Apost.

ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 72.—JULY, 1866.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

CHINA.

A Letter from the Right Rev. Dr. Desfleches, Vicar apos. of eastern Su-Tchuen, of the 2nd of October, 1865, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood, gives some interesting particulars of the Mission, and adds a few affecting words upon the martyrdom of the provicar, the Rev. Fr. Francis Mabileau, of which we spoke in the last number of the *Annals*. The venerable bishop, after having alluded to the violent persecution which had been excited against the Christians of the district of Yeou-yang-Tcheau, by Tong, the prefect of the department, relates that the successor, Teu, from Canton, who was appointed to put a stop to the persecutions, had been looked forward to as to a saviour. But this hope proved vain; the new mandarin was content with magnificent promises, and after this thought no more of the Christians, or of rendering them justice. The persecutors soon began again to hold up their heads, and to organize a fresh attack.

Father Mabileau, who had so arranged his journey as not to reach Yeou-Yang-Tcheau till after the installation of the new mandarin, was, as we have already seen, lodged in a pagoda; but he soon felt that his life was in danger, and prepared himself for the last struggle by prayer and an entire resignation of himself into the hands of God. Let us now hear Bishop Desfleches:—

“... A deep cry of lamentation escaped us on first hearing of the death of Father Mabileau. We all loved him and wept for him but after the first moments of our common affliction, we were comforted and gladdened by the consideration that our dear colleague had given his life for God, and that he was happy.

Father Mabileau was very zealous for the two Societies of the Holy Childhood and the Propagation of the Faith; and now that

he is in heaven, he will not forget the generous associates, who by their prayers and their alms assist us in opening Paradise to so many souls....How many times with my dear provicar did we arrange our plans for a greater development of the Holy Childhood in this vicariate! Like all missionaries new to the work, he was at first inclined to receive a great number of children, but experience taught him that in this province, the chief work, that which gives the greatest result, is the baptising of the children of pagans, whom it is here easy to visit in their parents' houses, and to baptise when they are in danger of death. We every year compound many different sorts of pills, for various maladies, and with these we abundantly furnish our travelling Baptisers, as well as all Christian families of any importance.

"...Let us hope that the Holy angels, whose feast we this day celebrate, will guide the steps of our Chinese Doctors, and incline all hearts towards our dispensaries. This vicariate numbers about 40,000 Christians out of a population of about 12,000,000, and includes 36 villages, which are the head quarters of as many civil districts. My great desire is to have a dispensary in each of these districts, well supplied, and served by two doctors. We have already 20 dispensaries, though some are poor in appearance and have only one doctor. This lessens their utility with the Chinese, for these people love appearance and show, and have much more confidence in a doctor who is well lodged, well housed and well dressed, than in one who, though more clever, is ill dressed and lives in a hut.

Our model dispensary is that in the town of Tchang-Kin. It costs about £30 per annum. The dispensary at Kiang-Pea-Tin, a town which is separated from Tchang-Kin by the river North, does not cost more than £30. This sum is now requisite for supplying and keeping up a dispensary in a suitable manner. There are some which cost less, for the good reason that we cannot spare so much as this for them....We have to support legions of travelling medical baptisers, who traverse the country, visiting the 14 or 1500 towns and markets of the vicariat, and devoting themselves to a work which calls forth all our energies and merits all our sympathies. It is nearly a century since this work originated at Su-Tchuen, under the inspiration of the burning zeal of a holy missionary, the Rev. Father Moye, the founder of the Sisters of Porcieux. His successors took good care that it should not perish, and we read in their histories that during a year of famine they sold their linen that they might be able to baptise a greater number of children....

"We do not entirely neglect the orphanages.....but our resources being limited, and not sufficing even for the business of baptising,

we naturally endeavour to spend as little as possible on them. During this year 39,414 children in danger of death, have been baptised in this Vicariat. If we could increase the number of our dispensaries and of our travelling baptisers, we should also be *certain* to increase the number of angels in heaven. Oh with what importunity will these dear little ones, who have become great princes, intercede with the King of heaven, for their godfathers, their benefactors, in short for all the associates of the Holy Childhood.

From the Rev. Father Royer, Jesuit-Missionary in China, to the
Director of the Institution.

(Kiang-Nan) Shang-Hai, 24th Aug. and 18th Oct., 1865.

Rev. Sir,

Our Rev. Fr. Superior begs me to communicate to you the following particulars respecting the interesting Society of the Holy Childhood in the European town of Shang Hai.

1050 little forsaken children have been regenerated by Holy Baptism ; 150, from 8 to 15 years of age, have been received and placed in our orphanages 'of Zi-Ka-Wei and 'Rsat-Kalen : 66 others are supported and brought up in private houses.

Through the exertions of the Rev. Father Seckinger, the Holy Childhood has been established in this town, in which evil so greatly prevails. There are as many as 29 sets of Associates. In a future letter I will give you further interesting particulars on this subject, but at present you must permit me to enter into details which will enable you to share in the great consolations which, thanks to the Holy Childhood and the prayers of the associates of the noble Society committed to your care, our dear Lord permits us to enjoy in this Babylon of Shang-Hai.—I will explain how it is that this year we have been able to make so rich a harvest of children from 9 to 12 years old....After the expulsion of the rebels (Tammos) from our province, in the month of February, 1864, the Mandarins brought a troop of 600 children, from 8 to 18 years old to Shang-Hai. They were all torn from their parents by the cruel rebels, (Tammos) and, formed in the school of such masters, they had learned all kinds of vices without even having had one good example before their eyes. Covered with vermin, in rags, deprived of every means of subsistence, in the depth of winter, most of them had no other prospect than sickness and death. The

mandarins not knowing how to relieve so much distress, wisely be-
 thought themselves of offering these 600 children to the Father
 Superior. Our new orphanage was not then built; we had already
 300 orphans crowded into a house which could hardly give suitable
 accommodation to 100. And besides this, typhus fever prevailed
 in it, and these little strangers were probably vicious and corrupted.
 The Rev. Father Superior could not prudently take charge of 600
 new orphans all at once, and without any time for previous consi-
 deration. Our superiors refused the offer of the mandarins for the
 time, in consequence of the want of funds and of houseroom, but
 they reserved the right of sending catechists amongst these children
 to help them, and above all, to gain opportunity for making a good
 selection from amongst them. Almost all these children were placed
 about half a league from the territory conceded to the English;
 poor cabins were built for them of reeds, through which the air
 circulated freely. Most of them diseased and covered with ulcers,
 were soon upon their beds, and suffering from all kinds of maladies.
 This was the theatre on which was displayed the charity of the
 hero of the Holy childhood at Kiang-Nan, the catechist Tie, so
 admirably trained by Fr. Clavelin. Providence here afforded to
 this holy man a fine opportunity of displaying his zeal, before his
 beautiful life was crowned with the death of a saint. Exhausted by
 his labours, having been for ten years the inseparable companion of
 Fr. Clavelin, the catechist Tie had asked permission of Fr. Senti-
 nier, the successor of Father Clavelin, to take some rest in our
 house of St. Joseph, in the European town. This was in the month
 of February, 1864, at the very moment when our 600 poor orphans
 were established in their miserable cabins of reeds. Our brave
 catechist was now called to employ his forced repose for the good of
 the souls of the town, and particularly of those sheep which were
 straying from the way. His tender heart was moved at the sight
 of so many children in misery, and forgetting that he came to
 Shang-Hai only for rest, he gave himself up to his favourite work
 of baptising forsaken, poor, and dying children. At least once
 every day, without regard to distance or bad weather, our holy
 catechist came to visit our orphans in their hospitals of straw.
 Thanks to his kind charity, they all soon learned to know him, and
 on his arrival he was surrounded by numbers of these children,
 calling upon him loudly for rice, for clothing, for covering as a pro-
 tection from the cold. The holy man was quite happy amidst these
 poor creatures, abandoned by every one else, and distributed all he
 was able to give them—clothing, money, and medicine, and above
 all, remedies for the itch. After having satisfied the most needy,
 he went to visit the wretched beds where lay the impotent, the

feverish, those sick in all manner of ways. With consummate prudence he said nothing of religion at first, but when certain of having gained the hearts of these poor creatures, he taught them its essential truths. The sick were the first who received the spiritual alms; very few of them rejected them. Exhausted himself, by ten years of so trying an apostolate, he was attacked by typhus in the midst of his course—perhaps from some of his dear children, and died on the 5th of August, the feast of our Lady of Snow, after having received all the last sacraments. It is not perhaps out of place to say that this holy catechist, baptised during the ten years of his apostolate either himself or through others, very nearly 20,000 infants. During the 5 months of rest which he ought to have taken at Shang-Hai, he baptised or got baptised 1200. He contributed during the same time to the rendering valid more than 30 marriages, and to the baptism of about 50 adults, to say nothing of the tepid souls which he gained to our Lord by the ardour of his zeal. After his death there was no one able to fill his place. It was the month of August, a month of necessary repose, on account of the great heats. At the end of that month holy obedience placed me at Shang-Hai, and the Superiors begged me to see what could be done for the poor orphans who had escaped death, and to select the youngest and least corrupt for our orphanage of Zi-Ka-Wei, the first wing of which was just completed. I went very soon to visit the place, and found myself surrounded by 2 or 300 children, the remains of the 600 who had arrived in February. They speedily recognized me as a European and a priest, and enquired of their great doctor of the Catholic Church, whom they had not seen for six weeks. After having told them of the death of the good catechist, I comforted them as I best could, and promised I would come and visit them, and give them another doctor, who would care for their bodies and their souls...During this first visit I was satisfied with seeing and examining the worst of the cases in the poor cabins. I was accompanied by a good many of the children, who of their own accord took me to those most in want. "Look" said they, "there is one who has no feet; this one has the fever, such a one dysentery, and this other is dying of hunger." I could hardly restrain my tears. If the superiors would only permit me to choose the best of these children—this was the thought which pursued me, and I had hardly returned to the house when I saw the Rev. Fr. Superior, and related my joys and my sorrows. He had had the same wish as my own ever since the time when the mandarins had offered him the 600 children. "Yes," said our Rev. Father Superior, "I waited till our orphanage should be at least begun before offering an asylum to so many unfortunate creatures. But

there must be a selection; choose the best, the youngest, and least corrupt." Since then two catechists have been employed in visiting and comforting them, in baptising them when in danger of death, and in instructing them. Half of them have been received into our two orphanages, and are now there.

Let us admire the wonderful conduct of Providence! Most of these children came from the extreme west of the Mission, where we have but few Christians. If these children persevere, we shall find useful auxiliaries in some of them; and probably catechists, who will propagate the good seed of the gospel in countries where the name of the Lord is now unknown.

Accept my excuses, Rev. Sir, for a letter which has been written at long intervals...Cholera, dysentery, typhus have made ravages among the children at Shang-Hai who are under my care. For two months I have been unable to touch my pen.

I recommend myself to your holy prayers and have the honour to be, Rev. Sir,

Your very humble servant,
Royer, M. S. J.

From Sister Azais, daughter of Charity at Pekin, to the Associates of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Pekin, House of the Immaculate Conception, 20th Aug. 1865.

My very dear Associates,

I am going to tell you something about the children of Pekin, that great town of which I spoke to you last year. Do you remember? You will be very glad to hear that these dear children love you very much; that they pray for you and are grateful for the advantages of the education which you procure for them by means of your little sacrifices. Go on my dear young friends. There are always a great many of these poor unfortunate little ones, and many of them have the happiness to enter this house only to receive Baptism and fly to heaven. In them you will have powerful protectors; they know your names and have been baptised with the intention that they should obtain from their Heavenly Father all that is necessary for you and your dear parents. Ask them for what you need. They will hear you. They are in heaven and not far from the throne of God. Think of their happiness. It is you who have procured it for them.

Come now, and we will pay a visit to our nursery. Do you see

those little ones weeping for their mother? how they are afraid of the sisters! but in a day or two they will dread to be separated from them. They have found out that we love them and desire their good, and they are right, for they are indeed worthy of pity. Many die of sorrow for the loss of their parents.

The elder children have this year been taken from the "nursery." Amongst them was the little Isabel of whom I told you last year. She is a good-hearted child but rather self-willed; a great fault in a little girl, which she is therefore desirous to correct. Do you see how happy Theresa and Rosalie are? It is because they have been selected for removal to the spinning department. The others are jealous for all wish to learn, and Louisa, with more conceit than the others, asks to go also. The sister promises, and whenever Louisa meets her, she asks if the time is not come for her removal. This desire to learn and to work is marvellous in a little Chinese.

You will perhaps wish to know what is this spinning. Look at this loom, around which you may observe small wheels fixed at intervals, and standing by each a child of 8 or 10 years old. With one hand she turns the wheel, whilst in the other she holds the cotton of which she makes little reels, which is afterwards woven into the cloth which is used for the dresses of our children. They take great care to deposit their reels in a little basket, and once a week, when I make my visit, if they have been industrious, they come very happily to show me the result. We employ all, even our blind and our idiots, and each receives encouragement and reward. Some of them are employed in making blue and white cotton which is used for their dresses. They also spin sewing cotton, which is a great economy.

This is the occupation of our younger girls; they work in the morning, and in the afternoon go into school. The elder girls employ themselves in more beautiful work.

Now come to the great workroom. It is my Feast-day, and after a little speech, a large table is uncovered. Every face sparkles with joy; and what do I see but a quantity of things each more beautiful than the other; ornaments, Church-linen, made, marked, embroidered, and got up by our dear children. But what gives them the greatest pleasure is that the name of each child is attached to her work. Do not suppose that our little children are without their little vanity any more than the children in Europe and France. Not at all; and I pleased them by looking over each name. I experienced much greater pleasure myself in knowing that the children themselves had thus worked to prepare a surprise for me merely on a slight suggestion of the Sister of the workroom. I had the same satisfaction from the class of day scholars. But I must now say a word about our elder girls. We have married three this

year, for it is the custom of the country to marry these dear girls very young, and the parents make all the previous arrangements, promises, &c. The day of the marriage having come, the young man appears, accompanied by his mother; he is taken to the foot of the altar, and his bride, whom he does not know, and will not for a week, is brought to him. They are neatly dressed, but not luxuriously; the priest blesses the marriage, and offers the holy sacrifice of the Mass, when the future husband and wife have the happiness of making their Communion. After their thanksgiving, the bridegroom returns to his home, and the bride to her companions in the work-room. Then young ladies of condition come and make her toilet, which is a task not soon performed; and when this is completed, they make her sit down after the Chinese manner, and she has then to weep for three whole hours.

At last her chair arrives with the usual musical accompaniment, drum, trumpet, cymbal, and I know not what; you must stop your ears if you do not mean to be deafened. During all this uproar the poor girl is weeping in the most heart-breaking manner. At last the critical moment comes; she is shut up in her chair, with a veil over her face, and is carried away to the sound of music.

At the moment of her departure her husband appears, and makes the *kotieu*, a kind of prostration indicative of respect and gratitude, and immediately goes off that he may be at home on the arrival of his young wife. And here again there are a number of ceremonies, but I have said enough to show how different the customs of China are from our own.

We have two grown-up pagan girls in our work-room, whose history will interest you. Their father, who was a Christian, had been brought up by our worthy Missionaries; subsequently he neglected his duties, and without permission married a pagan wife. From this marriage were born our two girls, to whom whilst awaiting their baptism we have given the names of Catherine and Cecilia. The negligent father took no care to bring them up in the religious principles he had himself received; he fell into distress, and sold his daughter Cecilia to some pagans. Years passed, and he felt no remorse. At last God, always merciful, spoke to the heart of this unhappy father; he became sensible of his faults, and went to seek the bishop, who opened his paternal arms, and expressed his desire that the daughters should be instructed and baptised. This was easy enough as regarded Catherine, but Cecilia had been sold to pagans, and these people are often deaf to the voice of reason. Bishop Mouly, however, was determined to make the attempt; he asked the father for what sum he had sold the child, and learned from the unfortunate man, who had not a farthing with which to repurchase

her, that it was for 16 shillings. "Very well," replied the holy Bishop, and lost not a moment; he instantly sent a confidential person with some money to try to get the poor child back. As soon as the pagan heard what they desired, and that the Bishop, as well as her father, wished her to be brought up a Christian, he made no opposition: "Well," he said, "since your Bishop is anxious to do a good act, I will contribute to it; take the child, and keep the money." Such a beautiful instance of charity makes us the more regret the blindness of these poor people.

Catherine and Cecilia were consigned to our care on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin. They were humbled and disappointed at being thus seized upon, and for several months they showed us that the devil held them in his snares; but they now attend to instruction and go on very well. We hope that aided by your prayers they will soon be fit for holy Baptism.

We have now received our boys into the orphanage at Pekin; they came to us from the country, and the liberty which they had enjoyed has made it rather difficult to reduce them to order; but like the girls they are well disposed. When asked who is the best amongst them, each raises his hand, crying out "I am, I am," but when anything wrong has been done, no one is the guilty person. This is the character of Chinese boys in general. They study well and are very good; I hope that next year I shall have something pleasant to tell you of them.

Let us pass to our day school: there is our little Mary, eleven years old, and still a pagan; she learns her catechism with delight, and tries every evening to repeat to her mother and her young brother, both pagans, all that she has learned in the day. She is very happy at the thought that she will soon receive holy baptism.

But she is taken ill, and sending for the sister, implores her not to let her die unbaptised. Hardly cured, her trouble increases, for her poor mother has a fever. The poor child has no rest till her mother has been received into the hospital, then she is in peace, and our merciful God grants her desire; her mother gets better, and is received amongst us as a nurse; the little brother is in the boys' orphanage, and all three are under instruction for baptism.

I must give you one more anecdote of our day scholars. We have great comfort in one of our younger girls, who was baptised last year; she is quite a little apostle in her family. Having learned that her brother was about to marry a young pagan, she flew to her mother, entreating her to oppose this union, representing how unpleasant it would be in the family, and how it might even lead her brother to neglect the duties of his religion. I know not all the reasons brought forward by this dear child against the mar-

riage; but she went so far as to propose to come herself to ask for one of our girls for her brother, and in the end did so well, that she succeeded in breaking off the marriage.

This poor child came afterwards to beg the sister's prayers for her father, and asked permission to go out that she might exhort him to take advantage of the exercises of the Mission. We are persuaded that she will succeed in converting the whole family, for her brother, who had neglected his duties for 4 years, has just approached the Sacraments on occasion of a Mission which has been given in the neighbourhood. We hope, dear associates, that this little history will increase your generosity: for ourselves, it remains for us to thank you and pray that God will pour His best blessing upon yourselves and your families.

Your very humble servant,

Sister Mary Azais,

F. D. L. Ch. S. V. D. C.

From Sister Martha, Daughter of Charity, Tien-Tsin, (Province of Pekin), to the Director of the Society.

Tien-Tsin, House of St. Joseph, September 8, 1865.

Reverend Sir,

If it is always a pleasure to give you an account of our little labours, I have this time a double satisfaction in doing so, having, in the first place, the pleasing task of expressing both our own gratitude and that of our dear children. But, without prolonging a preamble, which will only cause the loss of your precious time, I must tell you of their happiness as well as our own, when the day at last arrived on which we took possession of our new abode. We will follow them in their first visit to a house which had for so long a time seemed as if it were merely a castle in the air; and which in the eyes of these poor little creatures now appeared quite a fairy palace. We gave them a holiday, and often as the building had been described, nothing would satisfy their curiosity but to see it, and visit every nook and corner. They could not even wait for the day fixed for our removal, they imagined that there would still be interminable delays—the winter would come and put a stop to the repairs—the masons would not be able to work—the mortar would freeze under their hands. “Mother, mother,” was the constant cry, “we shall never go.” And, in truth, the impatience of the poor children was not altogether without cause. They were so crowded together, that even during the night there was hardly

room for them to stretch their little limbs. To understand how this could be, our young associates must be informed that our Chinese beds have no resemblance to those used in Europe. A bed here is nothing more than a large seat of bricks placed against the wall, and generally by the side of the window, under which a channel, or chimney, is formed, so that it may be heated, if needful, either by burning reeds in it, or with coal. Upon this sort of long seat, which varies in size, and which, with a cupboard, forms the entire furniture of a common room, the whole family sleep. A mat is spread upon it, and each person is supplied with what we call a foot-cover, which is wadded, and serves both for mattress and counterpane; in this each person wraps up as well as can be, with the head resting on a little shelf of wood, or perhaps on a cushion of millet-straw. This bed is not very luxurious, and gave occasion to the observation of one of our good missionaries, that "it would be easy to make a Chinese into a Carthusian." Then our poor little ones had so confined a space, that each encroached upon the possession of her neighbour, and in consequence some rather singular disputes arose. Then, each morning, the coverings had to be cleared away as quickly as possible, and the dormitory was transformed into a work-room, which at noon became the refectory, and finally, after dinner, the school-room. No wonder the poor children were impatient for their new home. So, to calm them a little, we determined to take them one day to visit the house which was the object of their dreams, and that we might put this taking possession under the protection of our holy Mother, we chose for it the day of the Immaculate Conception. We were to take one of her statues, and to place it in the most sheltered part of the place, praying her to be the guardian of our possessions. It was only a walk of about twenty minutes, of which we thought but little, but we had not taken into consideration the tiny feet of our poor little ones, enveloped in bandages, and enclosed in a narrow shoe with a wooden sole. The walk appeared very long to them, and more than one, forgetting the object of the journey, felt the tears springing to her eyes.

However, they put a good face on the matter, and the Pagans, little accustomed to such a sight, turned to gaze at these little people, neatly dressed, and walking in an orderly manner, two and two, in modest silence. Each made his own observation. "Who are those?" said one. "They are the children of Ten-sse-Tang," said a scholar who had seen these words over our door. "And who is Ten-sse-Tang?" said a third person. This question was embarrassing to the other, for the art of reading in China is so difficult that it takes years to acquire it, and a Chinese who can read is a

remarkable man. Many of them read almost as the parrot speaks, pronouncing words which convey no meaning. And the name of our establishment, which signifies Temple of Mercy, is plainly a dead letter to our poor Pagans. "But," said a fourth, "are not these children brought up by the white devils?" The answer being affirmative, "that is well," escaped from his lips; and this is great praise from an inhabitant of the Celestial Empire. We got to the end of our journey without any accident. When arrived, all fatigue was forgotten, legs were found for exploring every part of our new abode, and tongues were unloosed to enquire the destination of every corner of it.

The first thing was, however, to render honour where due. We solemnly deposited the statue of our good Mother, singing the Ave Maris Stella. Our children recited the litanies in Chinese, and then, after a short prayer, which each made for herself, free liberty was allowed them. It is impossible to describe the delight of our poor little ones, at seeing the place intended for them. "What!" they exclaimed, "a separate work-room!" "And, how large!" said another; "I have reckoned seventy steps to cross it!" "Ah," said a Tartar with large feet, "that is because with your little feet you walk like a duck running to the water; I only count fifty-eight." They were greatly pleased with the separation of the work-room from the refectory and the dormitory, and particularly with the division of the latter into different apartments, for whilst preserving the Chinese bed, we have contrived by means of wooden partitions, to give each her separate place.

After everything had been seen and examined, the conclusion we came to was, to thank our dear Lord from whom all things proceed; "But that is not all," we said, "it is true that all things come from God, but He makes use of means for bestowing His gifts, and who are those He employs in your case?" The reply with one voice was, "Our little European benefactors, the little associates of the Holy Childhood!" "Yes," we replied, "it is to them, dear children, and to the privations they undergo for you, that you owe the pleasure which you this day feel; what will you do to show your gratitude?" This was a difficult question. What could they do, being six thousand miles distant, and so poor that they had not a sapec in their purse? There was a few moments silent reflection, and then young Paula, one of the oldest of them, who, during the prevalence of the epidemic, was baptised, and made her first communion when in danger of death, rose from her place and spoke for all. "We quite understand how much we are indebted to our little western brothers and sisters who are continually depriving themselves of enjoyments for our sakes, and we also feel that there

is nothing we can do in payment of our debt but to pray for them; this we will do with our whole heart." "Oh, yes," replied another, who has also made her first communion, "I pray for them every day at the elevation in the holy Mass." "And I," said a third, "will endeavour to imitate them." "But," observed a younger one, "we shall never be able to see them and tell them how happy we are." "That is not certainly very likely," we replied, smiling; "but though you cannot see them, there is still a means of corresponding with them through a letter." At this there was a general cry, "Oh, that would be too difficult, and, besides, as they know neither our language nor our letters, they would not be interested in it." "No doubt your little European brothers would be rather puzzled to find out the meaning of your strange characters, but there are learned people in France who could translate them; so, no excuse, you must write; let your professor help you if you like, but the thoughts must be your own, and neither his nor ours; be sure that nothing we can say of you will give half the pleasure that two words traced by your own hands and dictated by your hearts, will afford." They made the determination very joyfully, and it was resolved to begin at once. You will find below the result of their labours. The Rev. Fr. Thierry has kindly added the French translation at our request.

The repairs took a much longer time than we desired. The visit I have mentioned was not our only one, we made another on the feast of St. Joseph, the patron saint of our venerable bishop, Dr. Mouly. His lordship, who was then at Tien-Tsin, kindly distributed cakes and sweetmeats amongst the children, in company with Bishop Languillat, and Bishop Guierry. It was really a feast.

The final installation was to have been put off till the return of Bishop Mouly, whom we had begged kindly to bless our new abode, and who, with his usual goodness, had condescended to accede to our request. But the typhus fever broke out anew, one of the Sisters and a child being attacked, and by the advice of an English doctor, who on such occasions is so good as to attend our sick, it was judged prudent to avoid the risk of contagion by hastening the removal. We were thus compelled to take up our residence in a house still full of workmen, but in compensation, we entered it just in time for the opening of the lovely month of Mary. A few weeks later, Bishop Mouly returned to Tien-Tsin, on purpose for blessing the house. The good Father rejoiced to see us so well established, and fixed Trinity Sunday for the ceremony. Assisted by Father Thierry, our zealous director, his Lordship blessed a gilt cross, 7 feet in height, upon a little terrace which

overlooks the whole of the port, so that it cannot fail to be perceived by any one ascending the river, even when at a considerable distance. Underneath the cross the statue of the Immaculate Mary was placed. May our dear Mother obtain, that all those who enter this port may become the faithful disciples of her Divine Son, this is our devout wish. This marble statue looks so pure and white on its pedestal, in contrast with the blue back-ground of sky, that even the pagans cannot help stopping to admire it. His Lordship then began the exorcism of the devil from a place where he had caused so much sin, and he did this with all the power and authority which is given him by his title of prince of the Church, and the many years during which he has fought the battles of the Lord. He did not forget the smallest room or courtyard, and the evil one must be tolerably cunning if he can find a corner which has not been blessed.

After the blessing his Lordship baptised two catechumens, one of whom was a patient of the dispensary, who in seeking a cure for his body had opened the eyes of his soul to the true light, and the other, the mother of one of our little adopted children. Thus it is that the Holy Childhood walks always hand in hand with her elder sister the Propagation of the Faith. And last his Lordship gave Confirmation to several Christians, and then celebrated the holy Mass, at which almost all who were present Communicated.

In the afternoon we had the installation of the outer school, who are more properly boarders, for the small feet will always be an obstacle in the way of the children coming in the morning and returning at night, as they do at Pekin and in our houses in France.

By-and-bye, we shall probably be able to form schools in the different quarters of the town which may be kept by Chinese women, and which the children of the neighbourhood may attend. But we must not think of this at present, for the Chinese do not sufficiently understand the benefit of education, nor even the advantages of having their children well brought up, for these schools to be of any use to them at present. At this time, then, we are obliged to receive into the house such little girls as their parents desire should be sent to us to learn to read. To relieve the Holy Childhood from expense as far as we are able, we require a small sum of money from those whom we believe able to pay it.

We have this day received, under the auspices of his Lordship the Bishop, those dear little orphan boys who were obliged till now to remain at the Mission. They took leave of the good Missionaries, whose kindness they duly felt, with much regret. There are 31 of them, and they give us great satisfaction, being as well

disciplined and obedient as we could desire. All communication with the little girls is strictly prevented, but as, unfortunately, the hall which serves us for a temporary chapel is a great deal too small, our little boys are prevented from attending Mass and Catechism as well as the Offices which are said in the house, and we are obliged to send them to the Mission, which being a quarter of a mile distant, is, in bad weather, very disagreeable. If you have condescended, Rev. Sir, to cast your eyes over the plan which I had the honour to send you last spring, you have seen that we have already the site required for a chapel, which is indeed indispensable, not only for the good order of the house, since the little boys could then, without inconvenience, follow the same pious exercises as the girls, but also for the Christian women of the village, who can go nowhere else, the chapel of the Missionaries being exclusively reserved for men. We have already a good supply of materials in store; some bricks for building, some timber, purchased for our repairs and not required for use, and part of a present made by the Commandants Ollivier and de Treve, who take a great interest in the establishment. These gentlemen kindly paid us a visit some time ago, and we took them all over the establishment, and confided to them our plans; they had the goodness to promise us the materials of one of their houses on the port of Takou, which they intended soon to give up. They appeared quite moved when we told them that our children lived generally only upon millet, and they made us a present of a store of white rice, which they at that time had in the fort. We have therefore wherewith to regale our little people, who are little accustomed to such good cheer, for some of the festivals, for which we reserve it.

And now, Rev. Sir, a few details respecting the children. We have 156 adopted children, of whom 32 are boys, 35 girls in the orphanage, 32 in the nursery, and 76 out at nurse; and besides these, there are 12 school girls, of whom 5 are pagans. This is an improvement upon the account of last year, and gives ground for the belief that the work is at last taking root in this town.

The disposition of the pagans towards us is assuming a more favourable character; they are beginning to understand that we have not come hither either to tear out their eyes, or to make profits out of an advantageous trade. They come to us with less distrust, and in our purchase of the house from one of the principal mandarins, we seem to have gained a title to some consideration.

The work of baptising children at home seems to have gone back a little this year, partly from our time having been very much occupied in the business of removal, and partly because there has

been no prevailing epidemic amongst the children. Our numbers only amount to 350. We hope for an increase next year.

Accept, dear Associates, &c.

Sister Martha, Dr. of Charity.

We add to this letter that from the Christian children of Tien-Tsin to their benefactors in France and elsewhere. The following is a faithful translation:

“From the Great Kingdom of the Dynasty of the Tsing—A town of Tien-Tsin.

“The Children of the house of Mercy respectfully address a letter to the Directors, and all the associates of the Society of the Holy Childhood in the kingdom of France and many kingdoms besides.

“Loaded as we are with benefits, we are to blame for having so long delayed to thank you—you, who have established in the kingdom of China a house of Mercy, in which numbers of children, both boys and girls, are brought up. If they are hungry, you give them food; if they are cold, you supply them with clothing; if they are sick, you comfort and cure them; if they die, you bury them; and when you come to die we hope our Lord will say to you, ‘As often as you did all these things to the little Chinese, you did it to me.’ For benefits which no tongue can fully express, you spend large sums of money.

“All this is entirely owing to the care of the Directors, and the efforts of the compassionate charity of the associates, who take pity on us from the supernatural love with which the heart of man is inspired, and which induces him to lighten our sufferings, to protect us against cold and hunger, and to obtain for us the greatest of all favours, that of being baptized and of serving the Lord.

“Sleeping or waking we can never forget such charity, and are under obligation to acknowledge it. But we are divided from you by a wide sea, and have no power to obtain means for proving our gratitude, except by praying for you.

“During Mass, and at other times, we beseech our Lord to bless you, we also beg the Blessed Virgin to intercede with God in your behalf, that He may repay you with special graces and protect you at all times.

“Hoping that we may all enjoy the favour of God whilst waiting for the ages to come in which we shall glorify the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

“The year 1865 of the Incarnation, and the 4th year, 7th month,

and 17th day of the Emperor TOUNG-TCHE, of the Dynasty of Tsing:

We Boys—Jan, John,
Tcheo, Joseph,
Tou, Jacob,

We Girls—Ho, Julia,
Hou, Agatha,
Lieou, Paola,

salute you in the name of all the rest."

EASTERN COCHIN-CHINA.

From the Rev. Fr. P. Dourisboure, Missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions, to the members of the Council of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Go-Thi, 20th Dec. 1865.

Gentlemen,

In the notes sent to the Council of the Holy Childhood by Bishop Charbonnier our Vic. Apost., you will see a memorandum of expenses on account of certain savages, in the name of this Society. During the 15 years since this mission to the savages was undertaken, and during the 15 years that I have myself been amongst them, I have never had the honour to write to you. I have read your interesting Annals however with pleasure, and have often blessed Divine Providence for having inspired the founders of this Society with an idea which gives joy even in heaven. I have kept silence for 15 years because I have thought the good that we do of so little importance, compared with the immense, incalculable good that the Holy Childhood is producing in the world, that it was unnecessary to bring before you details so comparatively insignificant; but having descended this year from my distant mountains, to salute on his arrival our new Bishop, and to receive his first blessing; his Lordship at once asked me if I ever wrote to the Director of the Holy Childhood, and on my answering in the negative, he first reproached me with my ingratitude to your inexhaustible charity, and then desired me to break my long silence; and, no doubt, apprehending a delay on my part, he put pen and paper into my hands, saying: "A letter to these good gentlemen at once."

I am then obliged by obedience, gentlemen, to address these lines to you. A thought has occurred to me. At the beginning of our Mission amongst these savages, my few colleagues and myself were such objects of alarm to the inhabitants of these forests, that we lived far from their villages, wandering about the woods, and seeking herbs and roots for our daily food. We had but a gloomy horizon in the distance, still, at that time, we were even able to do

some little good to the souls of little children. Often did we find these little creatures almost at the point of death, and, as it were, waiting only for the holy waters of Baptism before taking flight. Oh! how good, how admirable is Providence. Permit me to relate what follows to your dear children.

I shall never forget the first time that the hut of a savage at last consented to give me a night's shelter. I was stretched upon a mat to rest after the fatigues of the day, when I saw a number of persons assembling in the opposite end of the cabin. As yet I knew but a few words of the language of these people, but I endeavoured to ask what there was in that place, and I thought I understood that some one was dying. "Oh!" I said, "if it should be a child!" I rose quickly and went towards the crowd, which a little alarmed by my sudden movement stepped back, and gave to my view a poor little child with hardly a breath of life. I gave it instantly the Baptism for which it seemed to have been waiting, for having obtained its passport for heaven, it departed. "Little angel," I said to it, "at least tell our God that it is I who have sent you to Him." How peaceable was my sleep that night, I had saved a soul. I quite forgot the troubles and privations of every-day life, repeating to myself, "I have left a good father, a holy mother, brothers and sisters whom I dearly love; they are far away in beautiful France; but our Lord can compensate for them all. He provides other comforts for me here, and they are of a far higher nature. I have saved a soul.....the price of the Blood of a God."

I have chosen this instance from a number of others in which I have seen the action of Providence in an equally clear and striking manner, because this child was the first-fruit of the mission to the savages, and its soul the first which I sent to heaven. You will readily pardon my speaking to you of consolations which were but rare at that time. You can hardly imagine our position. Religion rarely takes good root where it is not accompanied by the cross, and the new workmen must be wounded by the briars and thorns of the vineyard of the householder, even when the axe of the executioner has not been prepared for them by the evil one. But then when our dear Lord, who is always good, imparts some sweet consolation to His Missionaries in the midst of their great tribulations, they feel so much joy, that though numbers of years may have elapsed, the remembrance of it remains engraven and living in the heart, and in speaking of it many years later, tears again came into the eyes. The time of great but salutary crosses has passed away, and my colleagues are gone to receive the palms due to their tedious martyrdom. Privation, sickness, fever, &c., have contributed to

hasten their happiness. For myself, I have borne the same crosses with more weakness and less love, and I am therefore left to see the fruits of these labours. Hundreds of savages are now children of the Church, and the neophytes are very good Christians. They have great simplicity and candour; and now that they know the value of a soul, and the necessity for the regenerating Sacrament for its salvation, they are full of zeal for the Baptism of little dying pagans. Amongst the children baptised this year there is one who is indebted for heaven to a man, who, now a very good Christian, was formerly at the head of a conspiracy to massacre us. He said one day : " Formerly I wished you evil, miserable man that I was; but now, Father, if you were attacked I would be the first to die in your defence." This letter is long; I must end it. I am, gentlemen, with the most perfect gratitude, and most humble respect,

Your humble but devoted servant,

P. X. Dourisboure, of the Congregation of Foreign Missions,
Superior of the Mission to the savages.

BRITISH INDIA.—MADURA.

From the Rev. Father Verdier, S. J. Missionary, to the
Director of the Society.

After having announced that the Orphanage of Adeicalabouram numbers at the present time 85 girls and 40 boys snatched from idolatry, and of some of whom the history would be interesting to pious souls, the missionary reminds us that since the foundation of this establishment, that is in ten years, 600 little creatures, the outcasts of the human race, have, thanks to their baptism, departed for heaven. Then tracing the footsteps of a loving Providence, he relates the following anecdotes of some of those who still survive.

Palamcotta, 14th June, 1865.

.....A pagan father and mother of high caste, instigated either by hunger or a vagabond spirit, determined to see something of the world. They were attacked by cholera and died far from their native country. Their death left a child of eight or nine years at the mercy of one of those infamous creatures who are accounted as consecrated to the heathen divinities. She took away the poor orphan, intending to bring her up in the same course, and as a sign of her consecration to this abominable career, she marked the diabolical

shape of a trident upon both her arms with a red-hot iron. The poor child, in whose soul God had, unknown to her, commenced the operations of His holy grace, was seized with such horror of this strange woman, who took upon herself so cruelly to be her mistress and her tormentor, that she could not bear her sight... Taking advantage of her absence, she took flight, but the fury having discovered the place of her retreat, endeavoured to take her away by force. The affair was carried before an English magistrate, and as her only reply to the claims of this "*servant of God*," as the pagans call these women, though known in Europe by the name of "*bayaderes*," the orphan showed the burns on her arms, and apostrophising her, said, "Are you my mother, cruel woman? By what right do you exercise such cruelty towards a child? No, I will never consent to live with such a barbarian!" The magistrate protected the child and placed her in a hospital. During a year this child frequented a protestant school, and came every day to the hospital for her rations of rice. She grew up without any one taking any care of her when out of the school. The magistrate, who was a virtuous man, feared that in the end she might be lost; so as he had heard of our orphanage of Adeicalabouram, he made a proposal, (which I readily accepted,) that I should receive this forsaken child. He afterwards came to visit our establishment, and to see his protegee. She presented herself full of joy. He asked if she were happy; "Oh, yes!" she replied, "I am indeed happy that, thanks to your goodness, I was received here." "Let me hear you say your prayers," said the gentleman, though a Protestant, and the child immediately began the *Our Father*. From that time this magistrate and his wife never meet me without enquiring after the orphan. They have often expressed their admiration for the Missionary, the Rev. Fr. Bossan, who devotes his fortune and his life to this work; beautiful in the sight of God, though obscure enough to the eyes of men, and who in order that he may feed these orphans, leads a life of hardship and privation. We nearly lost him this year. The prayers of his dear children, who would be inconsolable at his death, obtained his restoration to health. But we must leave our orphan to her happiness. She is now a child of the Church, whose triumph is attested by the diabolical sign imprinted on her arms. Let us observe her companion, who is rather younger, and but just arrived. Her ears are pierced all round with small holes, in this country an indication of Turkish origin. But the question is, from whence does she come? for the conversion of a Turk is a very rare event. Her father, who was at first a pagan, having fallen dangerously ill, begged for baptism when almost dying, and having heard that I happened then to be in Palamcottah, he had himself carried to the church,

where I baptised him, after having given him such instruction as a dying man can receive. I then proceeded on my journey, not supposing that his departure for heaven would be long delayed. However he recovered, and till his last breath always wore his Rosary round his neck. Unfortunately he married a Turkish woman, and had two children. He often urged this woman to be converted, and more especially to allow the two children to be taken to church and baptised, but she strongly resisted both requests. Very soon the poor man fell ill and for a length of time this Turkish woman, though suffering extreme poverty, nursed him with a devotedness quite remarkable. The sick man at last died, without the succour of religion, but he would never suffer his Rosary to be removed. The Turkish woman, left alone, brought up her children according to her own religion, but want and sickness soon brought her to the tomb, with one of her children, whom it was thought had been baptised without her knowledge. One orphan alone remained, who lived upon the alms given her, and chiefly by the help of a Catholic family who wished kindly to give her an asylum. On the first day of the month of May last year, after having celebrated Mass, I went to visit the little girls who were being catechised. One of them struck me at once. "Who is this child?" I said to the Catechist. She is a Turkish girl," he replied. "And how happens she to be here at catechism?" "Oh," he said, pointing to some of the best informed children, "she knows already almost as much as those girls." "And do her parents know of it?" "She is an orphan and a Christian has received her into his house." Then addressing myself to the child I said, "Would you like to be baptised and to become a child of Holy Church?" She smiled and nodded her head affirmatively. My heart filled with joy; I returned to the church to thank our Lord and His holy Mother for the present which I had received on the 1st day of the month, dedicated to her; and then I went to ask for further information about the child. The Christian who told me her story hardly knew what to do with her; he feared he should not be able to make a suitable marriage for her. It was easy for me to remove this difficulty by proposing to receive her into our Orphanage; so the child was called, and appearing to consent very sincerely, was at once sent in the company of a missionary who was going thither. But the devil, seeing his prey about to escape, raised up a little Catholic girl, who, meeting her during the journey said to her, "What! are you going to Adeical-abouram? you! a little Turk? And do you think they will ever receive a Turk into our Holy Church? They will make you work pretty hard, and your only reward will be blows." The poor frightened child related what had been said; no attempts to reassure

her were of any avail, and towards the middle of the journey she disappeared.

I was filled with sorrow at hearing this news, for I thought the poor child was lost for ever. But I was mistaken; Mary was watching over her. When overcome by hunger, the orphan returned to the Catholic family who had at first received her; but she dared not again appear before me. I had to wait for a favourable opportunity, which soon presented itself.....The Rev. Mother Mary of St. Joseph, Superior of the *Religieuses Reparatrices*, providentially passed through Palamcottah. I told her the story of this child, who was soon led by curiosity near to the church, for these were the first nuns who had been seen in this country, and their European faces, their sky-blue veils, their modesty, and their piety in the Church, are singularly striking to the Indian, whether Christians or pagans. When the Turkish orphan saw them she felt regret at the bottom of her heart that she had not gone to Adeicalabouram. ...I had her called; the Mother Superior received her as a mother would receive a child she believed to be lost. The heart of the child could no longer resist, and she begged to be allowed to follow the nuns. She has since been baptised, and behaves very well.

A Christian widow, named Antonial, came a distance of seventeen miles on foot, observe, to make a retreat with the nuns of Mary Reparatrix of Tutecorin. During her retreat she learned to make rosaries, and she received for the purpose a present of a pair of pincers. Having returned to Tiroumolaouram, her own village, she wished to practise her new art there, but being too poor to purchase the materials, her customers had to supply her with them. A catechist having procured what was necessary for making a good rosary, the widow set to work, and when she had finished it, set out in search of the missionary. Without saying a word to any one, she placed her rosary upon the altar, hoping that the priest would bless it when he had ended the mass, and unfortunately for a time forgot to claim it. The server at the mass offered it to a woman who was waiting in the Church, thinking that it belonged to her, and she, well pleased to keep it, took care not to own that it was not her's, but set off on her return home, two miles distant. The poor woman having returned in the evening to claim her rosary, found that it had been given to another person, and was inconsolable. She had come two miles to the church, and now she had to go two miles in an opposite direction, she had had nothing to eat, and, besides, she neither knew the way to her house nor the name of the person to whom the rosary had been given. What could she say to the catechist who had given her the materials to make his rosary? Whilst she was in this trouble, another widow,

who had also been making a retreat with the nuns, came and comforted her, offering to go with her in search of the rosary which caused so much annoyance. They set out, and soon reached the door of the person who had received it; as soon as she appeared she confessed her pious fraud, and returned it unasked. During their conversation, the widow Antonial, hearing groans in a neighbouring house, inquired the cause, and was told that there was a Pagan child dying. "A child dying!" cried Antonial, forgetting her rosary, "and is there no way of getting in to baptise it?" Immediately the three women set about arranging their plans. Antonial was not of sufficiently high caste to enter the house; the woman who had restored the rosary could go in, as she was known to the sorrowing family, but she did not know how to baptise. The woman who had accompanied Antonial, knew how to baptise, but being unknown, would not be allowed to remain in the house. What can be done? Antonial begins immediately to recite her rosary, and the two others go together to the house from which proceed the cries. The strange widow stops at the threshold, but the other enters boldly, goes straight to the child, takes it in her arms without permission, but without any one daring to prevent her, and carries it to her companion, who baptises it, she then returns it to its sorrowing mother. The two widows return, adoring a wonderful Providence, and in the meanwhile an angel has gone to heaven, there to celebrate eternally the divine love which raised up so many little incidents to procure it the grace of baptism.

The missionary who blessed the rosary, of which we have been speaking, found himself one day, during a great scarcity, without anything to eat. He sent his servant into the neighbouring towns in search of rice. Having come to a large village at about a mile distant, he went straight to the principal shop, where he found not a single grain of rice. Whilst he was thoughtfully wandering about, a woman, who guessed his difficulty, approached him, and told him to go and ask at such a house where there was a marriage, and they must have a superabundance of rice. The man went there, and whilst talking with the family, a Pagan woman arrived in great trouble, and asking for medicine for a little dying child. The missionary's servant, on hearing this, announced himself as knowing something of medicine, and under this pretence, he followed the woman, did his best to comfort her, saw the child, who had hardly a breath left, and baptised it.

I, too, finding myself one day in great want of money, sent a servant to knock at the door of a rich Pagan merchant who is well disposed towards us, to ask him for a loan. The Pagan was absent, and

after having waited for some time, my servant was about to return with his hands empty and his heart sad, when a stranger came into the shop to buy some medicine. They entered into conversation, and the servant learned that a little child was dangerously ill. As this man was of high caste, he had no difficulty in getting into the house, where he baptised the child, who appeared only to be awaiting his arrival to take its place amongst the blessed. On returning with more joy than sorrow, the servant said to me, "Father, you sent me to borrow money, this our dear Lord did not choose I should find, but in compensation He has given me a soul." He then told me of his exploit. I smiled with joy, and blessed the Divine Master for having given me more than I sought.

One more story to excite the zeal of the little associates for the Holy Childhood. A Pagan orphan, six years old, had been sent to us from Trichinopoly, where the orphans were too numerous. Home sickness soon took possession of the poor child, and young as he was, he secretly escaped without our knowing what could have become of him. But our Lord watched over the little prodigal. For four years he went about the country living as a Pagan amongst Pagans, when Divine Providence led him to Tuticorin. He took care to change his name that he might not be recognised as a Christian, and rubbing his forehead with dirt as the Pagans do, he engaged himself in a shop till a ship should be ready to transport him to Ceylon, where he would have been lost to us for ever. Whilst here, the love of Jesus destroyed the snares of the devil. A servant from Adeicalabouram, having come to Tuticorin to bring back some nuns who had been to visit their sisters established at the orphanage, chanced to see our young prodigal in the front of the shop, and thought they recognised the little Daiseam, (Constant), who had run away four years before. He informed the missionary, who immediately sent for him. Through fear, he at first denied his identity, but at last, with great confusion, he owned his fault, and throwing himself at the feet of the missionary, implored pardon and returned to the orphanage. He is now happy, and we are satisfied with his good conduct.

Accept, &c.

Verdier, S. J.

AFRICA.

MISSION OF ZANZIBAR—(EAST COAST.)

We request the particular attention of the friends of our Society to the moving letter of the Rev. Father Horner, the worthy apostle of the negroes. Many of our young associates will be unable to read these pages without tears; and may the tears which spring from compassion bring forth some fruit; may they be rendered fertile by a generous movement of the heart, and thus become a beneficent dew, fructifying the treasure of charity—a treasure which is indeed precious, since it enables our missionaries to purchase, if not all, at least a good number of those poor black children, doubly slaves, whose sad and touching picture is here presented to our sight.

From the Rev. Father Horner, Missionary of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, and of the Sacred Heart of Mary, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Isle of Reunion, Feb. 12, 1865.

After the expression of his sincere gratitude to the Central Council for the assistance given to the mission of Zanzibar, and some details respecting the financial condition of this mission, the Rev. Father Horner thus continues.

.....You no doubt desire to know, Rev. Sir, what is the number of Catholics actually composing our mission. Our ignorance of the language of the country on our first arrival has been a great drawback to our doing much hitherto among the natives, but now that we thoroughly have made ourselves masters of it, we hope, with God's blessing, to gather many souls into this one fold. Even in spite of our first difficulties, we have within our establishment sixty Catholic children, whom we are bringing up in a Christian manner, and whom we are training to agriculture and different trades. This little kernel is to form future Christian families, and by degrees centres of Catholicism.

Besides the children, there are about fifty native Portuguese, who attend the offices of our little chapel.

The hopes of conversion amongst the blacks are immense, not exactly in the isle of Zanzibar, where the Arab element is a serious

obstacle, but on the continent, where at some miles from the coast, is found a numerous free population, admirably disposed to embrace our holy religion.

A journey which I have made myself into that part of the country, as well as much information furnished by our predecessors, and also by several trustworthy European travellers, give us reason to assert that the conversion of the natives would be easy, had we resources sufficient to enable us to found establishments without loss of time. In the very journey to which I refer, the chiefs of the country, and other natives, pressed me to come and establish myself amongst them as soon as possible. "Come quickly, then, father; come and take care of our sick, instruct our children, teach them religion and work." They pressed me to promise that I would send them missionaries at once, they loaded me with presents, and followed my boat a long way into the sea, being unwilling to leave me till the last moment. I doubt whether in the whole world there is a single mission which offers so much facility for conversions as this of Zanzibar. In other places the missionaries are often exposed to persecution and danger, whilst here we are venerated and live in complete security. And the reason is easily found. The Arabs understand perfectly well that they absolutely require Europeans for the disposal of their merchandises, and that they may learn from them how to find in industry fresh sources of wealth, they therefore flatter them, and seek to attract them in great numbers to their country; and in this manner the Author of all good makes their material avarice serve as an exchange with the spiritual avidity of a future time. But the Arabs of Zanzibar are not fanatics, as they are in other countries; all religions and all sects enjoy the utmost liberty, and we are able to conduct our funerals with all possible pomp, singing through the streets, and the Arabs rising respectfully as we pass. Mahometanism is declining in this country, and the Mussulmans themselves often tell me, that they see clearly the decay of their own religion and the rapid progress of our own.

The capital of the island, which we inhabit, numbers a population of from fifty to sixty thousand souls. Its forty-five mosques are miserable places, roofed with straw, and form a strong contrast with the splendid houses of the Arabs; this is alone a sufficient proof of the decline of the religion of the country; it will probably in a few years become a mere European colony. Then, above all things, will the abolition of slavery give great facility to conversions, but whilst we are waiting for this fortunate moment, it is well to direct our thoughts towards the continent, where missionaries are impatiently expected.

The staff of our mission consists of three priests and four brothers, all members of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and the Sacred Heart of Mary: of nine nuns of the Congregation of the Children of Mary, who are Creoles of the Island, there are also sixty children, thirty-eight boys and twenty-two girls.

There are two hospitals in the mission, one of which is for sick Europeans, and especially sailors of all nations; and this charitable work, at the same time that it affords the men means for the general restoration of their health, gives us opportunity for saving their souls. The other hospital receives the sick of the town, and particularly lepers dismissed by their masters. Every morning at the sound of a bell, a great number of sick people drag themselves, to the mission to have their hideous wounds, which only devotion quickened by Christian charity, could endeavour to relieve, dressed by the sisters, true mothers of the poor.

I remember that one day a brave captain in the merchant service, seeing our good sisters dressing wounds too horrible for him to look upon, exclaimed, "But, Father, what must these sisters be who can look at and dress such wounds as those;" and taking some silver, he threw it to the poor creatures over his shoulder, and disappeared.

Numbers of times I have seen poor lepers who, dragging themselves upon their elbows to the mission, have said, "Ah, father, have pity on me; as I can no longer work, my master has cast me off, telling me to go and die at the cemetery! If you refuse to receive me, I must die in the streets, or rather I shall be devoured by the jackals." We have already received a good many of these poor creatures, some of whom have been found in the cemetery, and others on the seashore. Hitherto they have all, even the Mussulmans, asked after a few days to be baptised, and we have granted the request. Here is a real benefit. Here are older children—souls for which our mission has procured salvation. We have also had the pleasure of baptising several dying children, sent by their inhuman masters to the cemetery that they might become food for the jackals.

One day, when the children of the mission were passing that way, they found a poor child, about eight years old, crouching down and moving amongst the grass; the flies were swarming about his wounds, and his body was truly a skeleton. The unfortunate child could hardly tell us that he had been there five days, and had eaten nothing but grass like the beasts. Moved by pity, our children carried the unfortunate little creature to the mission, and every care was lavished upon him. The sight of our charity inspired him with language, quite natural in a poor slave. "Father," he said,

"my master had a red hot iron applied to my wounds, but when he saw that they would never get better, he had me carried to the cemetery that I might die of hunger. My master did not take care of me as you do, good father. Do you hope that you shall cure me that you may be able to sell me again?" "No, my dear child," I said, "it is not from motives of interest, it is only through love to God that we take so much care of you." "What is God?" asked the child, "and what must we do, where must we go to find so good a Master?" After some explanations, I made him understand that this good Master is everywhere. The child was full of delighted wonder, and asked constantly for baptism, which was granted him on the following day. He was so enlightened by the grace of the sacrament, that he spoke of the happiness of heaven as would a saint. Two days after this he quietly sunk under his prolonged sufferings; happy so soon to go and find the good Master whom he sought, and who desired him for Himself. No doubt he is now an intercessor for our mission.

On the day following two more little boys were brought to me who had been left by the sea-side by order of their master. These poor children were dying when brought in, and a few moments after their baptism they gave up their souls to their Creator. I should never finish were I to relate all the instances of this kind which come before me. They fill me with wonder at the love of God to these poor infidels, who must indeed be amazed at the gratuitous reward they receive in heaven.

The Mission has three schools for the boys and girls it brings up. The number given above (60) is only limited by our want of means. The slave market of Zanzibar is daily crowded with children. A boy of 5 or 6 years old costs us on an average, the moderate sum of £1. Is this much to pay for a soul which has cost the price of the blood of Jesus Christ?

How many times are sums much larger than this bestowed by those in the world on empty vanities. Would that charitable souls would follow the example of that pious Catholic of Alsace, who every year ransoms a little slave that he may receive Christian education from our Mission, in order by this means to redeem, as he expressed it, the want of piety of his own youth.

How would our Christians of Europe be moved even to tears, could they see with their own eyes the whole extent of the misery of the slaves who are sold like the lower animals in the market of Zanzibar. They are almost naked, and their skeleton-like appearance might touch the hardest heart. The Arab who wishes to buy a slave, opens his mouth, examines his teeth, feels his different limbs, and makes him walk and run exactly as we do a horse or an ass.

My pen refuses to describe the horrible scenes which pass in this market for human flesh. Some naval officers whom I took there to give them some idea of this Mahometan country were so indignant at the degrading spectacle that they exclaimed : " Oh ! I could never have believed such atrocities. Is it possible that beings which have been purchased by the precious blood of Jesus Christ can be sold like animals ? Is it possible that in the middle of the 19th century civilized nations permit the perpetration of such crimes ! " ...

It is unfortunate that we have no further resources for buying and saving at least a few of the hundreds of children who are every day exposed for public sale in Zanzibar.

Our third school is a daily one, opened by the mission to about 100 Mussulman children, who at present attend it only to learn French. Whilst teaching them the elements of the French language, we teach them by degrees the elements of our holy religion.

Besides the three schools we have mentioned, we have also a work-room for the little girls of the Mission, where they learn to sew and perform the household duties belonging to the mother of a Christian family of the lower class.

We have established an agricultural and professional school for the boys, which already by its workshops does considerable service to the country, and obtains great sympathy for the mission, both on the part of Europeans and natives. The workshops contain a forge, a joiner's establishment, a shoemaker's and a mechanical sewing apparatus. The youngest children are employed in gardening and cultivation; the elder ones are engaged in different trades in the shops, and our little Africans often excite the admiration of both Arabs and Europeans, especially of the commandant and officers of the naval station of the isles of eastern Africa by the produce of their labours at the forge.

There is therefore no cause for anxiety about the future of the mission, for its success is no longer doubtful, and to what we have already said may be added the hopes we may entertain from the native character and disposition.

The character of the black of the eastern coast of Africa is generally good. His native indolence, the sole obstacle to his conversion, would be vanquished were he early inspired with a love for labour. Brought up in Christian habits, this difficulty would no longer exist, and as we already find the case with the children brought up in the mission, work would by degrees, appear to him a matter of course.

Yet we must not conceal that the present generation not having imbibed the principles of Christianity from its earliest years, must still be rather defective ; the next will be less so, and so on.

An agricultural school which will take charge of the most promising plantations of the country, will conduce much to the desired end, and the children of the Mission, many of whom are old enough to marry, will be useful instruments in this good work.

These blacks, it must be remembered, are great babies, and require to be directed and sustained by the Missionaries, under whose paternal tutorship they would remain, their households being established on Mission Lands. Thus would centres of Catholicity be gradually formed, from which rays would come forth in the exercise of Apostolic zeal and the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. To leave these Christians to themselves after their education is completed, would be not only to throw away all the sacrifices their formation has required, but to lose their souls. The establishment of an agricultural work would be difficult and expensive at Zanzibar, on account of the comparatively high price of ground, but until the Arabelement is almost eliminated, and land in consequence a very moderate price, the work might easily be carried on in the interior of the continent.

Besides, the natives are highly desirous of an establishment of this kind, that they may learn to render valuable immense plains of remarkable fertility which have lain fallow to this day. The case is very urgent, if we do not wish to allow ourselves to be supplanted by the protestant Missionaries who have been here for six months.

Oh, Rev. Sir, if your young associates of the Holy Childhood were witnesses as we are of the forsaken state of the immense population of the coast of Africa, who seem by their claims upon Missionaries as if they themselves comprehended their misfortune, how would they hasten to our succour by helping us to begin a work on which the future of our Mission depends.

May the divine Master enable charitable souls to understand the urgency of our needs; may He furnish us through them, with means of satisfying the desires of our hearts. May He at last reward them generously for all the trouble they take and the sacrifices they impose upon themselves, in favour of our poor Missions. On our side we shall never forget our generous benefactors at the holy Altar and in our feeble prayers.

Accept, &c.

Horner,

Superior of the Mission of Zanzibar, Miss. Apost. of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, and of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 73.—SEPTEMBER, 1866.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

Letter from the Rev. Father Chevreuil, Missionary of the Society of Jesus, and Director of the Orphanage of Zi-Ka-Wei, to his nephew the Rev.....

• Zi-Ka-Wei, 19 Nov. 1865.

After having commented upon the numerous employments which the care of an establishment of 360 children, dispersed in three different houses, imposes on him, the worthy Missionary thus continues:—.....But if these occupations require a great deal of time, they also give us a great deal of satisfaction. Thanks to the prayers of fervent souls, our orphanage is very prosperous. God bestows His blessing upon it. Not only has it improved in regard to health, air, cleanliness, and industry, but what is of far greater consequence, the faith of these children born of pagan parents, their piety, their attachment to a home which, to them, is the gate of heaven, increases more and more. I begged of S. Joseph that he would be the protector of our orphanage, and I am happy in seeing that my prayer is granted. Next to the grace which comes from above, and without which we could do nothing, this happy improvement has been produced by the new arrangements of the Father Superior.

As the former orphanage was dull, unhealthy, and confined, so the new one is cheerful, healthy, and spacious. At Zi-Ka-Wei the children are quite in the country, and can fill their lungs with its pure air. They can now run, jump and gambol in their large playground. They are often heard to cry out: "Oh! how different

this is from the house at Chang-Hai." But the work is still far from being completed. We have not as yet been able to build more than half of what we require for the accommodation of so many children. The Rev. Father Superior has endeavoured to supply this need by lending a house belonging to this Mission, which is situated in the neighbourhood, but in addition to the inconvenience of the separation, this house is not at all suitable for the purpose. However we must be satisfied for the present, for the funds of the Mission will not allow of everything being done at once. Oh! if I had only the money required, what a number of children I could assemble. The suburbs of Chang-Hai alone would supply me with 200 in the course of a few days, and if our Fathers were only able to gather up all those who wander about begging a little rice in the other towns of the province, an orphanage five times larger would not be sufficient for them, and yet there would be five times as many children, who would be learning to know God and to save their souls. The need for orphanages has here no limits; means may be wanting, but children never.

Oh! if I could only assemble all the associates of the Holy Childhood, I should in the first place thank them for the good they effect, for this good is immense; then I should say to them: the great object of this institution is to snatch children from the hands of the devil, to save them from hell. Well now, the more you give the more children you will save; and this is a fact which I am in a position to see the truth of every day. I find myself obliged not only to give up the search for children, but even to close the doors of the orphanage to those who present themselves...It is with a very heavy heart assuredly that this is done, but it is for want of space to lodge the children and money to maintain them. The Fathers in their respective districts, place as many children as they can in Christian families, but even did they succeed in placing several in each of these families, I would undertake, had I a proper place, and sufficient money, to assemble more than a thousand at the orphanage.

And you, young associates, who are not able to help us with much money—comfort yourselves that there remains to you a powerful means of helping the missionary; and that is, by praying for him and the success of his labours. By your prayers added to your alms, you can procure for him the grace of God, and render him able to work marvels with very limited pecuniary resources. Some of our children, yielding to the evil suggestions of the devil, fled from the orphanage, but were severely punished. They returned to their former schoolfellows in such a wretched condition that they must have been perfectly cured of any desire to escape. A late

example, still more terrible, has been effectual in confirming the above statement.

An orphan 14 or 15 years old, belonging to a family who had fallen from wealth to ruin, came and knocked at the door of the orphanage. He was received and remained in it for some weeks; his beginning was auspicious, but he fell ill. On recovering from his illness he seemed quite altered; everything was a difficulty, and at last he declared that he wished to go, and to return to some relations who lived far off. As he was yet a pagan and on trial, I did not oppose his departure. He went, and had not got a mile from the orphanage, when a European carriage overtook him without his observing it. Hearing the shouts of the coachman he tried to escape, but it was too late. The wheels threw him down, passed over him, and left him lifeless. The unfortunate boy died suddenly and without the grace of Baptism, which he had once desired and solicited and then neglected. The news of this sad event soon spread through the orphanage, and you can imagine the impression it made, and what a subject it afforded for my instruction the following day.

Pray accept. &c.

Chevreuil, S. J.

From the Rev. Fr. Bourdilleau, Jesuit Missionary at Kiang-Nan, to M. Drouault, Rector of Saint Saturnin, Blois.

Isle of Tsummin, Feast of St Ignatius, 1865.

...In the month of Mary this year, and in the Christian settlement of Sin-Viai, or rather on the banks of the river, a child was brought for baptism who had been saved from death in a singular manner.

A pagan woman, who had become the mother of a third girl, filled with vexation, threw it into the poultry-yard and put two large bricks upon it to stifle it. Neither cocks nor hens came to peck at the poor thing, but on the contrary, each in turn crouched near her, as if to warm her and make her their own. The thing seemed so strange, that it attracted the curiosity of the neighbours, and a Christian woman who was amongst them, having removed the two bricks, told the cruel mother, that with her leave she would bring up the child. "I do not wish that, nor her father either; when the cocks and hens have well pecked her and scratched her, little girls will no longer have any wish to be born in this house, they will leave the place to boys." Without paying any attention to the reasons of the pagan, the other

woman had already taken up the child, and shewing her wrapped in her apron, "Neighbour," she said, "let me have her; it will be a good deed; and if next year you do not have a boy, you shall treat me as a false prophet." "Very well, let us try," said the mother, "but she will die on the road, carry her away quickly, and do not let me see anything more of her." Our Christian desired nothing better; putting down a packet of sugar completely to propitiate the mother, she set off at once and brought the poor child to be baptised. Soon after this the little creature exchanged her poultry yard for the steps of the throne of Jesus.

In the north part of the isle a good Christian tailor of the family of Lo, much devoted to the work of the Holy Childhood, rose early one morning to go and make some purchases in the market. With his 200 sapecs in a basket, and his rosary in his hand, the good man was walking on in the morning twilight, when in crossing a field of corn, about a foot high, he thought he heard a sound as of sighs, "Are the evil spirits trying to frighten me this morning," said he, "they do not know that I am a Christian, let us make the sign of the cross." So he crossed himself and passed on. Soon his good angel inspired him with different thoughts; "Suppose it should be a forsaken child! I will go back." He now employed himself in searching the field, and he presently found a charming little boy, quite vigorous and apparently belonging to a respectable family. Forgetting his marketing and his fear of evil spirits, the tailor hastened to take up the lonely child and carried him to a Christian virgin, who is his aunt. As soon as it was fully day all the neighbours came to see him; an old pagan, a caster of nativities, put on her spectacles and found so many good signs upon his cheeks, his hands, and in his eyes, that she at once went to tell a rich pagan neighbour about him, and this man having himself come to see him, proposed 12 piastres as the price of the child. In the mean time the tailor, who had gone out for his marketing, came back with a provision of sugar for the child's food, until such time as a nurse could be procured, at the very moment when the question of piastres was being raised. "Oh, no!" he said quickly, "I would not give you this child for his weight in gold! I have lost my day as far as concerns my work, so I shall go and seek a nurse for him. He will be a second *Fo Sem*" This is the name of an orphan already adopted by this charitable and pious family, who is 12 years old, and whose talents, piety, and good qualities give great promise for the future. Let the associates therefore continue to give both alms and prayers for those who are employing themselves in saving children, and then will our corn-fields yield a double harvest, which will be gathered

into the garner of the celestial Father, through the means of His children in the land of exile.

There are no Christians in our large suburb of Pau-Tsin, there is not even a pagan tower to receive forsaken children. But a butcher's stall has become very useful, for this large stall, which remains day and night in the street, is generally the table upon which the more humane Chinese place those children they are unwilling to kill, and yet will neither bring up themselves nor offer openly to the Christians. Formerly this was a rare occurrence, and the butcher cursed, if on opening his door he perceived a child. For the last 4 years he has been an altered man and he is become our friend. Thanks to the holy influence of a fervent Christian, he no longer curses or ill treats these little innocents ; on the contrary, he carefully preserves them and sells them to our Christians for 150 or 200 sapecs. It is agreed that if the Christian arrives before the door is opened, he shall carry off the child who has been exposed without having anything to pay to the butcher. So our little associates need not fear when they hear of this butcher and his stall. Thanks to the sapecs, it has become a table of salvation for many a little orphan.

The total number of our baptisms has been 2,043, almost all of whom, that is, 1,580, were brought up by Christians as long as they lived. The number of survivors is very small ; yet, since the foundation of the institution in this place by the Rev. Fr. Clavelin we have 790 orphans of all ages, nearly all of whom are placed with Christians, for the orphanage is merely a place of passage, a resource in certain cases.

Here to baptise a child is to adopt it. It is not as elsewhere, where thousands of dying children are baptised in secret without the expense of bringing them up. The reason of this is, that in our little island, every Christian is known to every one, and the pagans understand about baptism and the works of the Holy Childhood. They tell a Christian who comes to see a sick child, that he is going to baptise it, and then shut the door upon him ; so that it is only possible, by means of a few sapecs, to baptise such children as are rejected by their parents. If you desire to baptise many children, you must also desire to have many to bring up.

In short we employ all possible means for saving the souls of children...but infanticide will cease only by the influence of our holy religion. Dear Sir ! pray then for China, and ask the prayers of all who think of her. Ask for us the grace of an entire and sincere devotion to the glory of God. I also reckon on the prayers of the little associates.

Accept, &c.

Bourdilleau, S. J.

From the Rev. M. Tagliabue, Lazarist Missionary, Provicar Apostolic in Mongolia, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Mongolia, 30th July, 1865.

Rev. Sir,

Ten years ago, in 1835 our branch of the Society of the Holy Childhood numbered only 32 children; since that time the blessing of God has rested on it, and we have this year 401 children, all supported by the alms of the associates. The Society may therefore be said to be completely founded in this country. It is also well known to the pagans, who willingly bring us their children. They no longer spread reports that we tear out their eyes, that we make opium of their brains, and others equally calumnious of the same kind. They can see for themselves and judge accordingly.

The greater number of these children are here in the orphanage of Si-Wan-Tze, and I can report well of all these little people. They are wonderfully well, all are obedient, and I have only once had to punish the contrary fault. They learn to read, to sew, and pray, and their days pass in peace and happiness. Their clothing, food, and mode of Education, is in conformity with the manners of the country and the future position which these little girls will probably occupy.

I think this year will be a fertile one for our dear Society, and that our number will increase considerably, for oats, the principal food of the country, are very dear...What shall we do should our resources fail?

Some time ago I wished to try whether the Holy Childhood could not be brought to produce something even on our poor and barren soil. I directed one of our Chinese colleagues to preach a crusade for it when making his mission, and the success far exceeded our expectation, we have already more than 12 series of associates, and if famine had not appeared in another place where the same appeal was made, we should have had more than 30; this is not much, but with the help of time we may be able to spread our little work, and to show our good will.

It is no easy matter to find these alms. There is no opportunity here for the little pious practices which succeed so well in France and elsewhere. The children would be willing to make any sacrifices, but can sapeacs be given where there are none? I will tell you some of the means which our little Chinese sometimes use for

getting them. I ask little Lucy, "Well Lucy, have you joined the Holy Childhood?" "Yes, Father." "But the ten sapecs a month?" "Ten sapecs a month," she says, rather embarrassed, "I give them." "Yes, but how do you manage it?" "Well Mamma said, that if I was very good and knew my two catechisms, she would give me a little chicken and I should join the Holy Childhood. I have learned my two catechisms, and I am rearing my little chicken. It will grow bigger. Every day I give it some oats, and by the end of the year it will be worth 60 sapecs. Then I shall sell it. Mamma will give me something more, and my grandfather will give the rest."

An elder child cut faggots or grass upon the hills, and by this means amassed his little treasure. Thus you see the good example set in Europe is not lost, and that our little associates in Mongolia employ both alms and virtue in the good cause.

...It occasionally happens that God punishes visibly the unnatural parents who pitilessly reject their unfortunate children. Here is one example of this out of a thousand.

There was a pagan who had a son 12 years old. He was almost an idiot, but his father kept him, in hopes of getting some kind of service from him. As his hopes were slow in realizing, he resolved to get rid of the boy. He beat him frequently and gave him but little food; but as if protesting against this barbarity, the child lived on. His father, having resolved to get rid of him, took him one day to one of the many wild mountains, of which there are many in this country. He tied him to a tree, and there left him to die either of hunger, or by the teeth of the wolves which abound in those deserts. The child however disengaged himself and returned to the house. A person happened to be there at the time and proposed to the father to bring us the boy. We received him and now he works, and though not remarkable for intelligence, they say he will be able to gain a living. The guilty father received a miserable punishment at the hand of God. The day after his son left him he lost two oxen which were at his house, an inundation destroyed his field, and he is now a poor man without any one to help him. This was told us by the mother of the child. Will she be converted like her son? I dare not hope it. Yet God might grant her conversion to the prayers of the young associates.

Pray accept, &c.

Tagliabue,
Prov. Ap. Congre. S. V. of Paul.

We announced some time ago that the Rev. C. Verbist, Almoner of the Military School at Brussels, and the zealous director of the Holy Childhood in that town, was preparing to depart for China, where the holy Father had assigned him a mission, with several Belgian Ecclesiastics. Our best wishes followed the steps of those new apostles who were about to unite their generous efforts with those of their fellow labourers from France and elsewhere. Fr. Verbist and his companions are at this moment carrying out their apostolate in the very country of which we have just been speaking. We have great pleasure in publishing one of the first letters of the worthy missionary. It shows his continued affection for the Society of the Holy Childhood.

From the Rev. Ch. Verbist, Provicar Apostolic of Mongolia, to the Director of the Society.

Sy-Wan-Tze (Mongolia) 18th Dec. 1865.

We arrived at Sy-Wan-Tze, the centre of the Mission of which the whole has been given to our charge by the Holy See, only a few days ago, after a most favourable voyage, and I already feel the necessity for drawing your most serious attention towards this portion of the Lord's Vineyard. The Rev. Fathers Tagliabue and Bray, the Superiors of the Mission, have already told you of the sad condition of the finances of the Society, and the great demand there is for pecuniary assistance. I add my voice to theirs. I remember you told me two years ago that the Mongolian Mission is the poorest of all those in the extreme east.

The many establishments of the Holy Childhood which we have visited in the course of our journey, with all the interest which we have for a long time felt in this Society, have filled us with surprise and admiration. I am thankful to tell you that my feelings have been gratified in a manner which has fully repaid me for all the trouble I formerly took in making known and spreading the Society in Belgium. I need only say that it will be equally the object of my solicitude in my adopted country.

The Vicariat contains already 6 establishments of the Holy Childhood in districts very distant from each other. To double or triple their inmates would be only the affair of a few days. The support of each child stands at about 2d. a day, certainly not a large sum. I think therefore that it is but of little use to ask the Central Council for any definite sum for Mongolia. These data will enable it to decide upon the number of souls which we may save in this province, without depriving other Missionaries in China of the means of similar work.

At least we hope we shall be permitted to keep the 550 little

orphans who have been assembled in our refuges, and who are taken care of by young, unmarried Chinese women with a tenderness which would draw tears from the most insensible, and has caused us to shed many sweet ones.

Pray accept &c.,

Ch. Verbist.

Prov. Apos. of Mongolia.

From the Rev. Father Anot, Lazarist Missionary in Kiang-Si, to the Director of the Society.

Kiou-Kiang, 3rd Nov. 1865.

After expressing his gratitude for the new subsidy granted to the Mission of Kiang-Si, and various particulars which enable us to judge of the continued painful position of the Missionaries in this province in consequence of the hostility of the Mandarins, Fr. Anot thus continues :

..... I will tell you another means of conversion which is owing to the Holy Childhood. A child named Pie (Pius in Chinese) had been given in care to a pagan woman at the time of his birth. The woman whose disposition was good, and who had lost her own children, became attached to her little nursling and felt for its motherless condition. When the time came for giving him back to us, immense difficulties arose, and there was always a postponement of this event "till next year." At last the child grew so old, that he must be taught to know God and to pray to Him, and in a pagan household this was impossible. The difficulties were conquered, and the nurse gave in, but only after shedding torrents of tears, and in the hope that if she and her husband became Christians, the child would be restored to her. They at once put themselves under instruction, and the little Pius, 6 years old, arrived at Kian-Kiang. Word was sent to the pair that if they became sincere Christians, the little Pius should be theirs, that he was about to receive a Christian education and to study for a time, and after that should be sent back to them. As a pledge of this promise a handkerchief, some presents and some little European trifles were sent to her as coming from this future adopted son. Her tears again flowed abundantly—they were this time tears of joy, and the little presents were carried to all the neighbours in order to call forth their congratulations. The happy nurse soon sent her husband to Kiou-Kiang, 6 days distant, to offer their thanks and to assure us that they would both embrace our religion with their whole heart.

But the marriages of our orphans are what most impress these people. There is nothing better calculated to attract the admiration of the public, and to raise their esteem for our holy religion. For the better understanding of this it is well to recollect the Chinese proverb, of which this is the sense :—"If a family has brought up a distinguished girl, a hundred families court her. It is a good thing to save children who are rejected by their parents; but to support them, carrying on their education till they are grown up, and then procure a respectable marriage for them is a very superior good." Seven girls of our orphanage at Kiou-Kiang have this year quitted it for alliances with families living at a great distance. Their departure was simply a religious ceremony. On the appointed day the missionary celebrated Mass for the travellers. They were present, dressed in their rose-coloured bridal dresses, their shoes embroidered in needle-work, with beautiful flowers, artistically arranged upon their heads. All their little sisters were also there. The first thing was a little address to them. "You must consider yourselves," said the Father, "as little Missionaries, who dispersed amongst different families, will be able to strengthen the faith of other Christians by your good example; by the edifying recital of prayers and catechism to instruct those who are ignorant; and to convert your pagan neighbours by good words and exemplary conduct." When Mass was over the Father seated himself in the midst of the chapel, and was soon surrounded by the seven girls. Very soon one of them began to weep and the rest following her example, a great abundance of tears were shed according to the usual manner of showing regret for a painful separation. As the Father had been forewarned of this, he had furnished himself with such things as were best suited for drying their tears and softening their sorrows. He drew from his pocket the most beautiful chaplets which were at once suspended from the necks of each of the orphans; the picture of her godmother in France or elsewhere, which was to be placed in her prayer-book, some other little pictures, likely to be useful in gaining friends, each a scapular, just come from France, some other pretty little things, and lastly a piece of money for the journey, the whole ending with a blessing received kneeling. All these things went a great way to lessen the grief of parting.

After this came the process of a minute and detailed inspection of the possessions of each of the orphans. The whole was spread out in a room of the orphanage, the boxes painted a brilliant red, and containing clothes for all seasons and purposes, were all opened, every thing was examined and counted, even to the last articles of the toilette or implements for work. A list of every-

thing was enclosed written in beautiful characters upon bright red paper. This being completed, the beautiful boxes were closed and the keys were given to the orphans, to whom they belong. There was nothing more to do. Each girl had received her dowry, the whole of her possessions, as often happens, for the whole of her life.....The Father then retired, and now the younger girls, with their mistresses, invited those who are going to the parting love-feast. It is the simple table of the poor, and all was over by 9 o'clock, A.M. Then the beautiful palanquins, which the Father had borrowed from rich Chinese or from Europeans arrived in the required number. The little troop returned to the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, followed by all the community for the recitation of the prayers for those who were leaving. There were prayers, chants, and above all abundance of tears, and in the midst of these lively impressions, each orphan ascends her palanquin. The course of this long string of vehicles was opened by the bearers of the beautiful boxes which contained the possessions of the orphans. It was terminated by a concourse of many Christians in their holiday dresses, caps of ceremony and buttons of dignity. So novel a spectacle drew all the inhabitants of the houses and shops which fill the town of Kian-Kiang and its suburbs, in all haste to their doors, and in the midst of the public admiration and applause, our orphans embarked in the vessel which was to conduct each to the place of her destination, at sixty, seventy, or eighty miles off. The distance was sufficient to cause the departure of seven girls from the orphanage to become known by a considerable number of pagans.

Pray accept, &c.

Anot, Miss. Laz.

WESTERN TONG-KING.

The Right Rev. Bishop Jeantet, Vicar-Apostolic of Western Tong-King, announces that he takes the liberty to offer the Holy Childhood a testimonial of gratitude on the part of his mission, this is the body of the venerable Joseph Ly, confessor of the faith, and martyr. He gives the following notice regarding this illustrious Tonquinese priest.

March 7, 1865.

.....His father and mother, as well as all his relations, were Pagans, though there were some Christian houses in the town. His father, who was an honest Pagan, gave him a good education, and he was well versed in Chinese at an early age.

At the age of fifteen he was admitted into the Maison Dieu, by Father Khoa, who likewise gained the crown of martyrdom under Minto-Mannh. The character of our young pupil was ardent and laborious. He at once studied his catechism, his prayers, the rules of the house, and many books of religion, in the Tong-King character. He went through his Latin course successfully, and after reciting the books of the catechists, was admitted to this rank, and performed its functions with great zeal. He was then admitted a student in theology, and during the three years course was not one of the last. He was admitted to the priesthood on the first of August, 1852, and exercised its functions to the greater glory of God and the edification of souls.

He was arrested on the 31st of March, 1860, in the village of Y-Nhien. The family with whom he was were taken, lost all their fortune, and both father and son were condemned to hard labour for three years. The son fulfilled his sentence, but the father died on the very night on which his sentence was despatched to the capital for the royal approbation. This old man received the sacraments of the Church with great faith, and was buried in his own village.

During his first interrogation, my dear son, Joseph Ly, received sixty-one blows of the rod. These blows were painful, for he wrote to me: "Where were you then, my father? I have just received sixty-one blows with the rod, which have caused me great suffering; you have not sent me a word of comfort." I replied, "I would gladly have written to you, my son, but I feared that my letter might fall into the hands of the mandarins and increase your troubles."

This worthy successor of the ancient martyrs, heard whilst in prison the confessions of about one hundred and fifteen persons, and amongst these the good old man who had given him refuge. This worthy minister of Jesus Christ consummated his martyrdom by the sword of Ninh-Binh, a town of the second class, on the 7th of December, 1860, at the age of forty-seven. After his ordination, his father, mother, and brothers had been converted to the faith.

I shall feel happy the day I send off the body of our generous martyr to the Committee of the Holy Childhood, with the formalities required in such cases by the Holy See.

Accept, &c.

Ch. Hubert Jeantet,

Bishop of Pentacomia,

Vic. Apost. of Tong-King.

Extracts from Brother Emmanuel Riano, Provic. Apost. in Central Tong-King, to the Directors of the Society.

Tia-Lu, August 2, 1864.

I have now better news to tell you both as regards the Holy Childhood and the state of our holy religion. For some time past we have remarked that the terrible persecutions with which the king and his ministers have overwhelmed the Christians, were decreasing in violence.....I have left my hiding place, and my house is open to all Christians indiscriminately. I publicly celebrate the Holy Mass, and Christians flock to hear the word of God from all the cantons of the upper part of the southern province, to the number of three, or even four thousand men. But I am not secure enough to act without precaution. There are many mandarins who are the bitter enemies of our religion, and are trying all sorts of means for our destruction. There are some who have our priests seized and struck with rods, and who themselves strike them on the face and do other acts of the same kind. The Pagans spread about injurious reports of the Christians, calling them thick heads, fanatics, the dregs of the people, &c., and even the children rail at the Christian women when they are going to market or to assist at our offices, in a horrible manner. These children go to meet them, and mark a cross in the midst of the road they must pass over, in order that if they see them step upon it, they may be able to excite laughter and clamour at their expense. In spite of all these obstacles, in spite of the opposition of all the powers of the world, and the excitement of human passions, the Society of the Holy Childhood, by the blessing of God, has produced abundant fruit in this central vicariat. We hope that the zeal and vigilance of our Christians will enable us to gather still more. It is a great consolation to us to see the ruins of this vicariat, caused by the fury of the persecution, repaired in great measure by the fervour and zeal of the sisters of the third order of St. Dominic, and by the labours of a great number of pious women, who give themselves generously to this blessed work. I do not, indeed, know how worthily to praise their zeal and devotion.

They opened the gate of heaven last year to 26,654 children of Pagan parents. In 1862 they had already procured baptism for 24,546. Let this be told for your satisfaction and the spiritual joy of the Associates of the Holy Childhood.

The central vicariat has derived no small glory from this.

Thanks to the venerable council, and to all the associates of the Society, for the great benefits which they heap upon our mission.

The missionary having mentioned the death of the Rev. Father Emmanuel Estevez, his companion in the noviciate and devoted friend, thus continues: This much tried vicariat, now consigned to my infirmity and weakness, has suffered a great loss in the premature death of this excellent missionary, but He who comforts us in our tribulations, has consoled me whilst in anguish of soul, by the arrival of two young missionaries who came at the same time, as two other French missionaries for the vicariat of Bishop Jeantet.

Accept, &c.

F. Emmanuel Riano.

FRENCH INDIA.—MISSION OF PONDICHERRY.

From the Rev. le Hodey, apostolic Missionary, vicar of Pondicherry, to the Director of the Society.

16th January, 1864.

After having related the details of an affecting festival which was celebrated in honour of the Holy Childhood on Sunday the 15th January, the Rev. Mr. le Hodey thus continues:.....I come now to the most interesting event of the feast; one which had never before taken place here, and which the dear children of Catholic countries will certainly feel inclined to envy their little Indian brethren; I allude to the Baptism of twelve pagan children from seven to twelve years old, adopted and saved by the Holy Childhood. Twelve boys and twelve girls, all associates of Society, were their godfathers and godmothers; they had been nominated on the previous evening, and were most of them chosen from the holders of sets of twelve subscribers. As there were eight girls and four boys to be baptised, the twelve godfathers and godmothers drew lots to decide who should give the names to the godchildren. The godmothers took the girls and the godfathers the boys to sup and pass the night at their respective houses. On the following morning they brought them to the Church dressed in beautiful clothes and ornamented with jewels as if they had been the children of rich people.....I cannot tell you the happiness which I experienced when presiding at this ceremony and pouring the regenerating water over these blessed children, ranged in a circle around the sacred font. The godmothers, each standing behind her godchild, formed a second circle of twelve, and the godfathers

placed in the same manner formed a third. It was really beautiful thus to see the twelve years of the divine child represented in a kind of Trinity. All the children and a great many of their parents were present at the ceremony, which though perhaps rather long, they were recollected and silent.

After the Baptism they returned in procession from the Font to the Altar, singing the Psalm *Laudate pueri Dominum*. The happy twelve deserved the place of honour and were placed close to the balustrades of the choir. The ceremony of the morning was completed by the Benediction of the most Holy Sacrament, after which the godparents took home their godchildren and gave them a treat. In the evening there was a lottery of 1,000 tickets, the proceeds of which was a sum of £9 10s 0d.

To appreciate justly the feasts which take place in our Mission Church you should know that Pondicherry is divided into two distinct parts, the white town and the black. In the former, which is administered by a Prefect apostolic and Priests of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, the inhabitants are French, and everything is done in the European manner; it is quite a French parish. The other part is on the contrary, entirely Indian; catechism, instructions, all are given in the language of the country. It is indeed a Missionary country. The white children under the Priests who direct them have very beautiful feasts. They are forward in setting a good example, whilst our Indian children can only follow and imitate them. They are less favoured by the gifts of nature, but they have a good will, and this we must turn to good account.

Pray accept, &c.

I. Le Hodev,

Miss. Ap. Rector of Pondicherry.

From the Rev. Alph. Tarbes, Miss. Apost. at Pondicherry.

20th March, 1865.

The Society for the Prop. of the Faith is powerfully aided in the Vicariat of Pondicherry by the Society of the Holy Childhood. Here, as everywhere else, children are a powerful stimulus to the conversion of their parents. It often happens that the mother who has sold her child when under the pressure of want, comes at last to partake of its happiness and to receive the Baptism which she could not formerly bear to hear named. The mixed schools which are supported at the expense of the Holy Childhood are great instruments of good. The little pagans who become attached

to the precepts of Christianity, and draw drop by drop from the daily instructions, feelings of contempt for the impure divinities of paganism, will become fervent and well informed Christians, as soon as the opportunity occurs. In many places the children are so to speak, the instructors of their older parents, and this is notably the case amongst the catechists of Pondicherry.

We hardly feel the need for orphanages in the Vicariat of Pondicherry, for after their Baptism the children of pagans are taken care of by Christian families, who almost always adopt them. It would be desirable to found schools for the instruction of these poor children.

Father Barbé established a school at Callacoudehy, a village situated in the southern part of the Vicariat. It was frequented only by Christian children as the little pagans went to an idolatrous teacher. Perhaps my dear little friends you would like to enter our Indian school with me. Mud walls covered with cocoa nut leaves and the ground covered with sand form all the furniture. "And the tables? and the forms? and the cards," you exclaim. All these things are unknown; and, what will surprise you still more, many of these schools do not yet enjoy the advantages of printing. The school of which I speak is one of these. Come in, my little friends, but take care not to let it be discovered that you are associates of the Holy Childhood, for the attentions and homage of which you would be the object would prevent your enjoying the sight which we wish you to consider. Observe all those children dressed alike and somewhat expensively, ranged in a line and sitting on their heels. Some are calling out the letters of the alphabet with all their might, and writing them on the sand before them; others are spelling, very clearly, I assure you, and with a strength of lungs not inferior to the first, some syllables written on long palm leaves, whilst the most advanced are learning from their master, who is proud of his knowledge, the curious and difficult art of rapidly engraving Tamul words upon hard palm leaves; all these little people are calling out, singing, gesticulating and sometimes, thanks to the tumult, engaging in combats which the vigilant eye of the master and the eloquent cane are seen always to end.

If this kind of teaching appears original and little suited to our European customs, it is equally inefficacious for any progress in study. Wishing to obviate in some measure this want of success in elementary teaching, Fr. Barbé one day placed a little Tamul book from the printing press of the Mission in the hands of the children of the christian school. To describe the astonishment, the delight of these children who had never seen a book—to

describe their happiness at possessing this pretty little volume full of beautiful Tamul letters, and covered with a cover of bright yellow paper, would be to describe the surprise and admiration which was caused in Europe by the appearance of the first printed books. The happy possessors of this wonder did not fail to display it to the jealous eyes of the little pagan scholars, and an immense desire at once took possession of the hearts of the poor alien children. They hastened to their parents begging that they might be allowed to leave their own school and attend that of the Christians, but neither tears nor supplications could soften hearts hardened by paganism. The children, though in despair, did not lose courage, they assembled a large council in a corner of the village, and every one brought his knowledge and intelligence to bear on the question of the best means for obtaining the permission so greatly desired. The conclusion of the debate in this new kind of assembly was no less extraordinary than their deliberations; henceforth, all the children would refuse to take food till they should be permitted to attend the Christian school. This was the resolution unanimously adopted. A day and a half passed without any child giving in. The parents, alarmed, held council in their turn, and there was another meeting, but with a very different aspect. The discussion was serious; the fight was between human nature and the worship of the devil. The parents' heart carried the day, and in spite of their terror lest their children should be converted at the Christian school, it was decided that the much wished for leave should be granted. The pagan school is now deserted, the twenty-five courageous conquerors enjoy their victory, and read in the little book with the beautiful yellow cover. They rejoice in having left the pagan school, and "every time that I visit them," says Fr. Barbé in ending his history, "they prostrate themselves before me asking my blessing and saluting me in the beautiful Christian formula, *Glory be to God, Father.*" You will say, "good little friends, be Christians as soon as possible," will you not? This is what your wishes and prayers will obtain from heaven. We hope so.

Pray accept, &c.,

Alph. Tarbes, Miss. Apost.

BRITISH INDIA.

From the Rev. Fr. Saint Cyr, Jesuit Missionary, to the Director
of the Society.

Conttélour, 18 Dec. 1865.

Reverend Sir,

In making my visitation in Marava, the Holy Childhood is one of the chief objects of my solicitude. All our Missionaries have equally at heart the progress of this most satisfactory work. We hope that with time and patience the good will increase more and more. Conttélour, from whence I write, is the centre of a district containing more than 4,000 Christians. A few years ago, in spite of the endeavours of the Father who had the charge of it, the work of baptising pagan children had very little success, and now there are few countries which in this respect are equally fortunate. The number of Baptisms each year exceeds 500; we have several baptisers and all with one exception, work without fixed salary.

The small pox has not the same malignant character in India which it bears elsewhere and rarely assumes that of an epidemic. The Indians treat this malady by a cooling diet; which is cocoa juice, fruit and lemonade; hot food or drink being entirely prohibited; yet as it is difficult for the poor to follow this regime, a certain number of children die of this disease. The English government with praiseworthy solicitude give free certificates as vaccinators to well disposed men, who receive a small compensation from the parents of the children they vaccinate. Government furnishes the vaccine matter. Some of the native doctors also vaccinate, but as it is without a certificate they subject themselves to certain penalties by doing so. We have both certificated and non certificated vaccinators amongst our Christians. It has been the business of the Missionary to make all enter into his views. He has succeeded, and this is one of the secrets of our success.

A widow who lost her husband at the age of thirteen and who has always lived like an angel, is in possession of the family secret of a remedy which has always been considered sovereign in certain maladies to which children are subject. The possession of this secret, added to the esteem raised by her good conduct, induces many pagans to bring her their sick children for cure. Though she is expected to cure all, there are many who die, and she is

clever enough to know when this is likely to be the case and to baptise them. "You have come too late," she says, "the child will sink," and this seeming prophecy only increases her reputation.

The Chinese and Japanese, not to speak of the Malgaches who are lower in the scale of civilization, look upon natural deformity as a punishment and sign of the divine anger. For this reason they pitilessly kill all the children who are born deformed, and have a great aversion for elder persons who are afflicted with any infirmity. The Indians, on the contrary, look upon any deformity as an immediate blessing from heaven. They even go so far as to believe that it is as it were a divinity residing in the persons who are the victims. Far therefore, from seeking to destroy them, they take particular care of these unfortunate beings; it is their pleasure to keep them and they take good care not to refuse them alms, for their curse would, in their eyes, be a source of misfortune.

I had baptised the whole of a Pariah family with the exception of the father. He alone held out against me. His body was covered with excrescences which gave him a hideous aspect, but this infirmity obtaining for him both the alms and the respect of the pagans was an inducement to him to hold out for some time. At last with great difficulty he decided to be baptised. Not far from him lives a poor Pariah Christian who is a complete cripple dragging himself about with difficulty to ask alms. No one refuses him. Pagan women go so far even as to present their children to him, persuaded that a prayer or his blessing will bring them good fortune. Well! this man, in other respects the refuse of nature, is the cause of the salvation of many children; by baptising the most sickly of those presented to him. Does not this story give us occasion to admire the ways of divine Providence? I must tell you of another Pariah Christian, who is the head of his village and a clever doctor. This man is in fact a Pariah only in name, for his majestic courage, his noble and affable manners, his high sentiments, and above all his enlightened piety, might place him on an equality with the highest classes. But the Indian does not blush for his caste or seek to emerge from it, and if his conduct is honourable he is equally esteemed by every one. This is the case with the chief of whom I speak; he is sought after as a doctor by all classes, so that his opportunities for baptising dying children are continually occurring.

Accept, &c.,

L. Saint Cyr, Miss. Apost.

Extracts from Sister Saint Matilda, Superior of the Community of the Infant Jesus, at Singapore, (British India), to the Director of the Society.

October 29, 1864.

After some interesting particulars about the good conduct of the young orphans brought up by the Sisters at Singapore, and their zeal in labouring according to their ability, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, the Sister Saint Matilda relates an affecting story in which the finger of Divine Providence is visibly revealed.

We have three children who are preparing for baptism. One of them is already fully instructed, and will soon receive it. The goodness of God has saved her from a serious danger; she feels this, and is very thankful to be safe in our house. When five years old she was carried off in an inundation in which several persons perished. She was saved by a man who thought he might make a profit by her, and he sold her to some one else. After some years she was again sold, and brought to Singapore, having been purchased by a rich Chinese, with several others, to be again sold at a higher price. In the house of this Chinese she found her father. The inundation had not only deprived him of his daughter, it had also swept away his little fortune. His wife had died shortly afterwards, and he decided to leave the country. Divine Providence led him to Singapore, where comfort and great graces were waiting for him. He became cook to the very person who had purchased his daughter; she of course did not recognize him, but his name, which she had never forgotten, made her tremble and shed tears whenever she heard it pronounced. She had been for some time in this house, when the cook being once alone with her, questioned her about her family, and recognized her by what she was able to tell him of her recollections. But she was a slave, and he was poor; how could she be withdrawn from the hands of her master, and saved from the sad fate which awaited her? The thing appeared impossible, and he thought it was best to say nothing of the tie which attached him to the poor child. Moreover, he sought only in vain the assistance of some generous souls to help him. No one would act against the interests of the rich Chinese. He did not know what to do. He knew a Christian, and told him his trouble. The advice he received was that he should come at once in search of one of our missionaries, who promised to make it all right with the police if he could only effect the poor child's escape.

He succeeded in this—during the night, at the risk of breaking her bones, she threw herself from the window with another slave, her friend. A boat was waiting a few steps distant, which carried them to some Christians at the other side of the isle, but these people did not dare to receive them. The missionary then came to ask us if we would receive them, having previously taken the necessary measures with the police, to prevent our being troubled. The flight of the two was soon known, as well as the place where they had taken shelter. The Pagans became furious against the Christians, they took up arms, there were wounds, and later, an assassination. As to the runaways, they were covered with bruises, but these were soon cured. They congratulate themselves every day on their deliverance, and employ themselves with their whole hearts in preparing for baptism.

The poor cook, you may well suppose, never returned to his master. He did better. He left the place, and he is become a good Catholic. Gratitude to God for having saved his child was the first step in his conversion.

Accept, &c.

Sister Saint Matilda.

In a letter from Penang, (November 1, 1864), Sister Saint Appolinarius, of the community of the Holy Child Jesus, gives some equally interesting particulars about the good disposition, the piety and the zeal of the young pupils of these sisters.

On Whitsunday, she says, we had the baptism of three Chinese girls. These children, who had been but a short time in the house, surprised us by the readiness with which they learned their prayers and the principal truths of our religion. One of them, Justina, had been sold to some natives of Malacca, and one day her mistress gave her so many blows with the cane, that she ran away and came to us. She was covered with blood. The poor child probably deserved some of these blows, for she was far from being a good girl, but after her entrance into our house, an extraordinary change took place in a soul hitherto accustomed only to evil. It often happened that when anything disappeared, suspicion of the theft turned upon Justina. At last, unable to bear this constant suspicion, she said, one day, in a manner to be understood by all her companions, "You must know that I have never stolen anything since I was baptised, and learned that thieves go to hell." For the last ten days, a young girl from Malabar has come for instruction, and this morning the missionary has hardly recovered from his surprise at hearing her answers and the prayers which she has learned in so short a time. Thus you see that these people are

capable of instruction, and far from saying with those who have been unable to form a permanent school of them—"No, nothing can proceed from such intellects;" enlightened by Divine light, we render an additional testimony to our holy faith, in saying, "To grace all is possible, and the renovation of the heart belongs to the Catholic religion alone."

From the Rev. Father Borie, Missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions in Malacca.

Maria Pindah, 4th Oct. 1864.

Rev. Father Borie gives a very interesting account of the little savage Malaccians who are full of gratitude towards their little European benefactors.

He draws the picture of one of the epidemic visitations of small-pox, which in these countries, where the disease is sadly misunderstood, puts to flight all the inhabitants of the place where it breaks out. So that the poor invalids are left without care, and the dead without burial. The Christians, however, enlightened by faith and moved by charity, act differently from the pagans.

...Early in February, says Fr. Borie, a Mantua woman came to me; she was a Christian, and married in second marriage to a Chinese who is a bad Christian. "Father," she said, addressing me, "the small-pox is in the neighbourhood, I shall fall a victim, and this will be right, for I abandoned my first husband a year ago, when he was dying of this malady. My second husband has in his turn forsaken me for other reasons. I am come for refuge to the orphanage. There at least I shall die under your eyes, near to my child, and God will pardon me." "Come Beatrice," I said, "fear not, only submit to the will of God without reserve." A few days after this the small-pox broke out in the two orphan schools. Beatrice showed no apprehension, and nursed the first children who were attacked with great zeal and charity. She was then seized with the same kind of small-pox as had carried off her first husband. Her body became hideous to look at, but her soul was calm and resigned, and God enabled her to bear her frightful sufferings with patience. She saw that she was dying, but the approach of the last hour gave her no sorrow; she asked pardon of God, she pardoned her second husband, commended to me her little Charles, suffering from the same disease, and died on the 30th of April, whilst pronouncing the names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and blessing the Holy Childhood, which had opened her an asylum at her last hour.

The malady was in both the schools, when Eliza, a young Chris-

tian, who had been married about four years, and who was one of the first who had been brought up at the expense of the Holy Childhood, presented herself to the orphanage, saying, "Father I am come to take my former place of first in the house. My husband has gone away in alarm, and I am come to die near my Father and my dear Sisters." "You are welcome, my child," I replied, "fear nothing, we will take great care of you." She already had the fever with the most alarming symptoms, and in a few days large black spots over the whole of her body, made it impossible to recognise her. But Eliza had a lively faith, and her resignation was admirable. Her prayer uninterrupted. She gave up her soul to God on the 9th May, after unspeakable sufferings. Her last look was one of love cast upon the crucifix which hangs in the hall, and her last words were these: "Jesus, I give Thee my life and my soul. O Mary Immaculate, my good mother, come to me and leave me not till you have led me to your Son. Amen."

On the first of June came little Sabina's turn; she was a charming child, and one of the strongest in the school. The poor child became blind, and her limbs were paralyzed, but she was always patient and gentle, and her lips were always murmuring a prayer or chanting. This dear child, of angelic purity, during her blindness, saw her good angel constantly standing at her right hand and smiling on her. "But my dear Sabina," I, one day said, "you are blind, you cannot even see a lighted torch, how then can you see your guardian angel, and describe the beauty of his costume, starred with diamonds, and bordered with fringes of gold?" "O Father! I really see my good angel," replied she, "he is at my right hand, there, quite close to you" (my hand touched the child's right hand;) "I do not see him with my body, but with my soul." When she could no longer speak, the movement of her lips shewed that she was recommending her soul to God. After she had expired, I wished to comfort her father, a man of great faith, who had hardly yet recovered from the same disease, but the good man cut short my condolences, by saying, "I regret my child, but I cannot weep for her, for she has died with the faith of a saint, and the purity of an angel...God has taken her from me. Blessed be His holy Name." "Amen," I answered.

Faith was not less lively on the part of the men, as of our little scholars. One evening, when I was watching the little boys, I told Charles, the son of Beatrice of whom I have already spoken, to offer his sufferings to our Lord, and to beg Him for patience and resignation. "I have resignation," said he, "but my patience fails, ...I suffer so much, Father; may God have pity on me." A moment after, fearing that his mother would hear his cries, I said, "my poor

Charles, your cries are very loud, look at Romain, how patient he is." "That is not surprising," he said, "he is a great boy and I am a little one." "There is Marion, he is as small as you are, and yet he is very patient." "Very true, Father," replied Charles, "but he does not suffer so much as I do. I am more seriously ill than he is."

Amongst the young people, not belonging to the Holy Childhood, there lived near to my house a young pagan lately come, whom I had taken instead of a debt of some piastres which was owing to me. This young man, who was at that time in good health, soon after fell ill. I visited him carefully and began his instruction, deferring to baptise him unless I saw any danger of death. But one night Puxah became much worse, and he would insist on his mother calling me immediately. But as she apprehended no immediate danger she told him to wait till the morning. "But if I should die without baptism," replied Puxah, "God would not receive me into His paradise, and I want to go thither." The day following, the 6th April, after having said Mass I went to see him and told him I was going to baptise him. "Well and good," said he, "I have been asking for you all the night; in my delirium I fancied you were by my side, but one thing gave me pain—you did not baptise me!" I baptised him, and called him Gabriel. After the ceremony I said, "dear Gabriel, I am obliged to visit some other sick persons; I leave you under the care of the great archangel, whose name you bear." "O, Father!" he replied, "my desires are accomplished. I am a Christian, and shall soon depart to heaven. Many thanks, Father, for all that you have done for me—ah, how happy I am!" He made the sign of the cross, and I went to my other patients. Two hours later Gabriel had departed for a blessed eternity.

And thus this illness, which might have been the destruction of our Mission, in trying the faith of our Christians, has given it strength. I look upon it as a great evidence of improvement that our Christians, instead of taking flight, have on the contrary mutually assisted each other. Not one has been found to forsake a house in which there had been a death from small-pox which was the old and universal custom. To sum up the whole, I have to congratulate myself on what has happened, for God has been adored and glorified, and my flock has been purified and confirmed in virtue.

What can we conclude from all this but that the alms of the Holy Childhood are well disposed of here, and that if they do not produce so striking an effect for the present as in certain other

Missions, the good which results is perhaps more durable as forming Christian centres for the future.....

Accept, &c.

P. H. D. Borie, Miss. Apost.

CEYLON (BRITISH INDIA.)

From the Rev. Fr. Saint Geneys, Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Miss.
in the district of Valigammia.

Nauvantorre, 1st Dec. 1864.

Rev. Sir,

My knowledge of the country, the moral improvement of the Christians of Valligammia, the prolonged residence of the same Missionary in this district, and if I may presume to say so, the confidence everywhere established by the qualities and virtues of Father Salaun, give me every reason to hope that the Society of the Holy Childhood will speedily take deep root and bear abundant fruit at Valligammia.

In the mean time I thank God for His goodness in having given me an opportunity for making a little harvest of souls this year by the Baptism of some pagan children attacked by Cholera.

The following story will not perhaps be found devoid of interest. One day I was going on foot to see the Rev. Salaun who was giving a Mission at a little Christian place about a mile distant. Passing near a group of habitations belonging to *Nalaver* pagans, a low caste, whose occupation it is to clean the palm trees and to collect the *Dallan*, (which is a spirituous drink of the country) I stopped for a moment to enquire after the public health. Fearing a refusal more or less polite, I entered without ceremony into their little enclosure, chatting with the persons who had accosted me with the evident intention of preventing me from advancing. It was a miserable hut, and at one end were lying on the ground two sick children nearly naked. I approached with the evident intention of entering, but the father prevented my doing so by bringing the children to me himself. I told him I should like to baptise them. He made some difficulty, but the Indians think it is always dangerous to oppose the will of the priest, and in order to escape bringing upon himself the anger of the God of the Christians he agreed to every thing with a good grace, and himself

helped me to make one of these children, who was 5 or 6 years old, understand something about the true God. Felix, (I gave him this name) thus owes his eternal happiness to a walk taken by chance, or rather God Himself directed my steps towards this poor cabin for the regeneration of his and his brother's soul. Thomas survived, but I hope to purchase him from his parents who are very poor, and to place him in St. Joseph's orphanage. The eternal salvation of an adult is owing to a very singular circumstance. Lucas, a doctor, whose house was near, wishing to avail himself of the title of baptiser, with which the Missionaries had invested him, to gain the public esteem, openly asked a pagan to let him baptise his two children. I had cautioned him against such imprudence, but God turned it to the father's salvation. Lucas knew so well how to manage, that the father consented; the two children were baptised, and one of them soon departed to heaven. No doubt the little angel Peter implored the God of mercy to convert his father, to whose consent he owed his own salvation. Two days later, the father was attacked by the same disorder; he asked for Baptism, wishing, he said, to go the same way as his two children. His former conduct had been little edifying, but his repentance and the grace of baptism must have obtained mercy for him, from Him who, on the cross promised heaven to the converted thief, and I have the sweet confidence that he is now reunited to dear little Peter in the heavenly kingdom.

Pray accept, &c.

Saint Geneys, O. M. I.

ANNALS
OF THE
Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 74.—NOVEMBER, 1866.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

From the Rev. Father Loriquet, Jesuit Missionary at Kiang-Nan,
to the members of the Committee of the Society of the Holy
Childhood.

Island of Tsang-Ming (Mission of Kiang-Nan)
14th Jan. 1866, Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.

Gentlemen,

..... Divine Providence has lately opened to me a large field of labour, in which for many years have been produced fruits which are well pleasing to the Infant Jesus. Father Bourdilleau having been called to another post, I am appointed his successor, and after nine years absence I return to the Island of Tsang-Ming, where for five years I had laboured in company with the Rev. Fathers Werner and Pingrenon, carrying out the different objects of the dear Society. You will easily understand how interesting this new field of action is to me. Allow me to dwell for a few minutes on the impression made on me in returning to an island which it is pleasant sometimes to call the privileged land of the Holy Childhood.

My first care on returning to Tsang-Ming was of course to renew my acquaintance with persons and places. This was both easy and pleasant, for I found myself surrounded by nearly the same faces as formerly, save that some few in the interval of nine years had been called to the reward of the just. I recognized at the first glance nearly all my administrators of parishes, our baptists, and the collectors for the Holy Childhood.

I must own, however, that I had a little difficulty in recognizing amongst the interesting little faces which pressed round me, the countenances which had formerly been so familiar. The reason for this is simple enough. Those who were children when I left had grown up, and given place to those children of the present day. Figure and carriage alter with age, and the simplicity and freedom of the child are succeeded by more serious language and reserved modesty. And besides this, in a meeting of the Holy Childhood the first place plainly belongs to the youngest, the elders have only the second or third; yet it did not always require a long examination to recognize some of my old friends. And again, it was pleasant to find that many of the elder children came not empty-handed, but joyfully bringing some pretty little orphan, chosen from amongst the latest recruits of the Society. After this first glance, then, I think I can say that the Holy Childhood has lost nothing at Tsang-Ming, but that, on the contrary, it is increasing, and will continue to increase. Charity is wonderfully fruitful; the young protégés of our Society have hardly learned to do without the care which was at first bestowed upon them, than their hearts are inspired with a wish to bestow the same upon others still younger than themselves: they fulfil as it were by instinct those offices of which they hardly understand the meaning or the merit. Thus the changes which I observe in the people of Tsang-Ming are greatly to its worldly advantage, and I can with pleasure say the same as to the other point. I hasten to give you the proofs.

Many projects had been more than once proposed and discussed before I left the island, so that I was not surprised to find on my return that the influence of the faith had grown and increased. Some chapels had been recently opened to the new neophytes, and others, too small for the surrounding population, had been replaced by more spacious edifices less unworthy of the name of churches. It is only doing justice to the wise administration of the Rev. Fathers Pingrenon and Bourdilleau to say that they have well employed this interval of nine years. They have left behind them, I will not merely say durable traces of their zeal, but also monuments, pardon me the term, whose aspect and proportions will in far distant times mark the date of that era of religious progress upon which this country appears now to be definitely entering. The Holy Childhood has also a place amongst the new establishments, and it is principally on that account that I enter on the subject.

When I left Tsang-Ming the Society was already publicly established by the construction of an orphanage, intended to

receive the overplus of our establishments ; that is to say, the little pagan orphans for whom we could not at once find room. The building, though modest in its architecture and proportions, is handsome enough in appearance, and is close to the central residence of the missionaries of the isle. It has served as an asylum and an antechamber of heaven to hundreds or rather thousands of the little innocents who now enjoy the society of the Infant Jesus.

Since that time we have regained possession of an old church, situated in the very heart of the town of Tsang-Ming. Its restitution has since been completed in an official and legal manner, and we now publicly exercise the functions of our holy ministry within it. Surrounded as we are by the insignia of paganism, we yet preach with full liberty the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and under the very eyes of the adepts in error, we freely administer the sacraments destined to combat and destroy its empire. Formerly we should have avoided the sight of even the smallest official personage, but now the representatives of authority, civil, military, and scientific, receive and visit us as if we belonged to themselves, and our mutual relations are as those of equal to equal.

And whence arises this happy change ? It is under the shelter and influence of the Holy Childhood that our credit has been established and confirmed : it is, at least, in great part to its reputation for benevolence that we owe the esteem which is felt for us by the honest and peaceable, and the respect with which our presence inspires the turbulent and litigious people who are so numerous in these parts. Under the happy auspices of the old church of which I have spoken, there has arisen quite close to it, an offshoot from the general orphanage, known in like manner by its true name of House of the Holy Childhood. This recent establishment is indeed far from complete, and its buildings are neither so large nor so well arranged as could be wished. Small as it is, it suffices however for the purpose for which it was intended. The newly arrived little ones find milk and a cradle, and the elder girls education and such work as is fitting for their age and capabilities. The numerous and minute little household cares which an assemblage of babies in however small a number requires, are also committed to these latter, and lessons, cotton spinning, and weaving of cloth, fill up the intervals which are left free by other occupations. Some of the wet nurses belonging to the establishment live in the house, others, and the greater number, remain with their families in the town or its neighbourhood, and when they come every month to receive their stipend they bring

their little nurselings in their arms. By this means it is ascertained that the children receive proper food and bodily care. There is a small piece of ground which may be enlarged, outside the town, belonging to the establishment. A part of this is intended to receive the mortal remains of such orphans as die in spite of the charitable care they receive, and whose souls enter on the possession of celestial bliss. The remainder is under cultivation, and produces a part of the vegetables which are required for the consumption of the house.

There are then, you perceive, two well and rightly constituted houses of the Holy Childhood in our island of Tsang-Ming, at eight leagues distance from each other, which are both doing a great deal of good. As particularly regards that in the town its importance may be guessed from the fact that there is a pagan orphanage also there of very ancient date, and which is here, as everywhere else, falling to ruin. I think our two establishments are not only useful, but really necessary on account of their general effect; for it is only by having the working of religion under his eyes, that the pagan will by degrees give up the prejudices which blind him. You will hardly believe that after the number of years during which so many pagan children have in all quarters of the island, been openly saved from want or from a violent death, and generously brought up by the charity of our Christians, there are still people who think, or at least say, that we buy these children only to kill and eat them. I will give you an anecdote which has lately been related to me by one of our catechists.

The occurrence took place during the first years of the restoration of our church in the town, and before the establishment of our second orphanage. The catechist I speak of was at that time master of our school in the town of Tsang-Ming. The young hearts of his pupils, mostly pagans not yet depraved by vice, could not fail to receive salutary impressions from daily witnessing what took place in our church, and the good works performed by the Christians of the neighbourhood. One of them having learned that one of his neighbours, who had lately become a mother, was deliberating as to what she should do with the child, advised her to give him to the Christians; which she did. The child was baptised, and then placed under the care of a Christian family living some miles distant. Two years elapsed, and then the mother expressed doubts as to the fate of her child, and became uneasy. She asked if the child was really alive and had not been eaten. Upon the latter point you may imagine the reply, and with regard to the former they promised to obtain information,

and if her child lived that she should see him. He was quite well, and was brought to her very nicely dressed; she appeared so pleased and satisfied that she begged to keep her child for two days, which being granted she begged for two more days, which were also granted. The time having passed, it was five days before the child returned, and then his nice clothes had entirely disappeared. "Sir," said the mother to our schoolmaster, "I will not hide what I have done; I am poor, and have sold the child's clothes." Such is the maternal tenderness of Paganism! A selfishness which strips her child to clothe herself, and which in order to attain its end is not ashamed to cover itself with the pretext of an odious and absurd imputation on the Christians.

About this time last year a child of eight or nine years old was brought to us almost deprived of reason.....He had been picked up by a Christian on the seashore, seated on a kind of raft formed of straw and reeds. The place in which he was found, and his condition, made it seem improbable that he had been placed there by any of the inhabitants of the coast. There was no family in the neighbourhood to which he could be supposed to belong. It was therefore presumed that he had been deposited on this frail skiff from some boat, and then having been left to the mercy of the winds, had been pushed to the shore by the rising tide which in retiring had left him aground. However this might be, this is an instance of the humanity of pagans.

The Holy Childhood has just lost one of its most zealous co-operators at Tsang-Ming. This good woman, called Ten-Zun-Kou-Mary, had been devoted to the good cause from the time of the Rev. Fathers Clavelin and Werner. She was one of the first who helped to take care of our orphanages, and then she crossed the sea to take some practical lessons in medicine at Wan-ka-dang, near Zi-ka-Wei, returning to devote herself to the service of little Pagans. It was to her care that Father Bourdilleau placed the little one of whom I have just spoken. For several years she has divided her time between the instruction of catechumens and the baptism of children. The ill health with which she was afflicted never interfered with the work to which she had devoted herself, nor did it cool her ardent desire to labour for God. She was seized with her last fatal attack while in her school of catechumens having laboured to the last moment of her existence. We have just deposited her mortal remains in the same cemetery of the Holy Childhood in which the remains of the Rev. Fr. Werner, one of the most zealous promoters of the Society in Tsang-Ming and Kiang-Nan, have reposed for the last ten years. God grant that we may one day partake of their glory and felicity in heaven.

J. Loriquet, Miss. S. J.

From the Rev. Fr. Alph. Favier, Lazarist Missionary in China, to
Mr. a member of the central Committee of the Society.

Pekin, Jan. 25th, 1866, Feast of the Conversion of S. Paul.

Bishop Mouly was one day visiting an Asylum in Paris placed under the care of the Daughters of Charity. A child came from the ranks and approached his Lordship. "What do you want, my dear child?" said he. The child frightened, lifted up her hand and showed a halfpenny, "You give me this halfpenny—is not this it?" said the good Bishop. "It is for the little Chinese," replied the child. The bishop kissed her and took her little offering. I was present at this scene, and said to myself, "I am going out to China: I will remember this day, and be careful of the money of the Holy Childhood. It is the money of souls, the money of our dear Lord; the money of heaven," and from that moment I have always looked upon the alms of the Holy Childhood as sacred. I wish therefore to do much and spend little in this district; but as it is very populous, and has neither dispensaries nor baptisers, it is necessary to set one's wits to work, and following your good advice, to create, as it were, means for doing good. Our Christians are poor, and cannot help the Holy Childhood with their money, but when a little stimulated they are very zealous. They ask for nothing but to be put in a way to do good. I have bought a collection of sacred pictures, rosaries, and Chinese prayer-books, and with the aid of their distribution I intend every year to have more than 1000 baptisms, each of which will cost about a farthing.

I have two distinct Stations :—the winter Missions, which last six months, and the summer Missions of the same duration. In the winter I have only the villages of the plain south of Peking, in number about 45. The work of the Mission is carried out thus. The Christians, who know beforehand of my arrival, come to me where-soever I am; some in a great open car, drawn by few or many animals of few or many kinds, sometimes by an ox, or an ass, or a horse, or a mule, or perhaps by two horses, who have an eye between them, or perhaps by four donkeys who reckon three eyes in all. They take whatever they can get, and reach me at last. Then, after having knelt down to our prayers I question every one about the Holy Childhood. "How many children have you baptised?" "Ten."—"Very well, here is a cross for your rosary.—And you?" "Twenty-five."—"Here is a picture of the Blessed Virgin."—"Father, give me a rosary: I have not got one."—"How many have you baptised?"—"Not any."—"Well then, no baptisms, no rosary;

next year you shall have a very nice one if you only baptise 10 children. In the mean time say your rosary on your 10 fingers." This is my way, and I assure you it has its favourable results.

The other day, I was at the village Liou-Ko-ism, where a good Christian asked me for a picture of the "all-powerful Saviour," a picture which is in great request amongst the Chinese. Upon this I asked my customary question. "Have you been baptising?" "Father," he said, "I know you are not satisfied if we forget the pagan children, so for the last eight months, having a little spare time, I have been going about all the villages;—here is my list." We counted together 236 children, and you will believe that the man had the desired picture, though it cost me 5 shillings, that is about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for each baptism. I have promised him also that I will go to Pekin and get a little Chinese medicine, without which it is difficult to get into pagan families. Three days after this I was in another village, called Se-fa, when a good old man came to confession, and before going away, he said:—"Father, during this year I have baptised a few children; here are their names." There were 256. Surprised at this from a broken down old man, I asked, how he had contrived to baptise so many children: "Father," he said, "I carry on a little trade. I sell thread, needles, laces, &c., and I carry about with me a little medicine; and then when selling to the mothers, I see if the children are ill, and if so, I baptise them." This good old man had been on foot as far as Pekin, to replenish his packet of medicine—12 leagues, 2 days' journey, at his own expense. Bishop Mouly had said to him, "you are poor, so you had better make yourself known to the Missionary of the district, and to tell him that I give him leave to assist you. In consequence of this, I offered him some money, but it was impossible to make him take it. He replied: "It is true, Father, that the bishop said this, but I cannot take money; I baptise children because it is a good work and pleasing to God. Give me, if you like, a little picture. We have not any to pray before with us." Of course he had the choice of my stock, and was content as his only earthly reward with a painted cross which only cost one shilling.

Very lately a good woman who had baptised many children would not accept even a picture. "Your picture," she said, "is very pretty, but I do not want it. I did not baptise for the sake of reward, but only to please our dear Lord." I do not think any one in Europe, or in our own pious France, could have done better. It is very consoling to the Missionary to think of the number of dear little angels who go to pray for their pagan relations in heaven! It is they who obtain conversions, and water this dry ground

with celestial graces. The Holy Childhood will bring about the conversion of China.

Besides the baptisms, I sometimes adopt children. In this case, if the children are very young, I put them at nurse, but I am afraid of the expense, and the number is consequently restricted. If they are older, I send them to our Sisters at Pekin. The other day at Penang, a good pagan came to offer me his little girl, 10 years old, and quite blind, saying : " Father, I love my child very dearly, but I have not food for her. She has neither mother nor aunt, and I should like to give her to you, that she may be a Christian and go to the *Tense-tang* (the Sisters' house) at Pekin. I accepted the child, and gave leave to this good father to go and see her when he visited the capital. He was delighted, and gave me a very large parcel of clothes for her use...Allow me tell you how prosperous the establishment of the Sisters has become. It is very beautiful to observe the manner in which they transform their children. I will give you one example out of a thousand. During the mission to Kan-hi-Ko last year, a little girl was given to me only 10 years old, but who had wickedness enough for 15 at least. When placed with the sisters, she began to curse, to cry, to swear, to jump out at the windows, to strike every one, and to steal every thing that came in her way. Six months later, when I saw her again, I could hardly recognise the same child in the one whom I saw making her genuflection while asking my blessing ; I should rather have taken her for a well-behaved little French girl in Paris. She has taken great pains with herself ever since. She is one of the best of our children, and she will make her first communion this year.

I should like now to take you in spirit to my summer mission. The scene here changes. We no longer see the immense plains which surround Pekin and stretch out towards the South, but in their stead, splendid mountains separated by impetuous torrents, and profound chasms. The kind of travelling vehicle is also changed. Adieu to the nice car in which I could recite my office, and even lie down and sleep when fatigued. A mule has replaced it, and perched upon the innumerable packages which it is necessary to carry about, I have to scale roads the horrors of which it is impossible to describe. In spite of the real dangers of these wild roads, by the help of God the journey is at last completed ; but you must not go to sleep, or your fate may be that of a catechist who one day rolled into a ravine, and owed his life simply to the beneficent brambles which had been placed there by Providence. There are some settlements of excellent Christians on the summits of the hills, 20 or 25 miles NW. of Pekin, where the

Holy Childhood is held in great honour. It is amongst these poor people that I have my only school in the whole district. It is attended by a great many pagans, and costs £8 per annum, which is paid to the schoolmaster. This is my greatest expense. Did time permit I should again speak of the number of our baptisms. But what is the use of my repeating the same facts? The Christians of these parts are as good and as zealous as those of the plains, and the souls of the little Chinese seem to ascend to heaven even more rapidly and in greater numbers from these elevated summits. At the beginning of this letter I spoke to you of 1000 baptisms: this was my dream. But I believe that this number will be exceeded; I have just been examining and adding up my list, and have reckoned already more than 750 baptisms for this part alone, since the 15 Aug. All this will not cost me more than £8 at the utmost, not counting the school expenses.

I have only spoken of my own district, because it is the only one with which I am sufficiently acquainted, but Bishop Guerry endeavours to place the Society on the same footing everywhere else. We seek for plenty of fruit and little expense. I have no doubt there will be a considerable increase in the number of baptisms for 1866, and I believe that our method of acting coincides with the intention of the Society, and if carried out, the wise and forcible advice I received from you on my departure from Paris. I have therefore robbed the Mission of a little time in order to write to you, and to assure you that every one in Pekin does his best to diminish expenses and increase results. Be assured Sir, that the Missionaries all perfectly understand the devotion, the charity and zeal of the little associates of the Holy childhood, and that they feel it to be a sacred duty to dispense faithfully these first-fruits of their charity. Neither does the priest forget them at the Holy Altar, and many masses are said for them in the course of every year. May the Lord vouchsafe to hear our prayers, and increase more and more a Society which seems destined to be the means of bringing brighter days to the Chinese empire, and of planting in the hearts of its inhabitants that peace which is given to faith even in this world, with a foretaste of eternal glory.

Accept, &c.

Alph. Favier,

J. P. and H. M.

From the Rev. Father Gaetano Stevani, Jesuit Missionary in China, to the members of the Central Committee of the Society. (Translated from the Italian).

Eastern Tche-Ly, Aug. 23, 1865.

Gentlemen. You have no doubt been informed that our venerable and beloved Vic. Apos., Bishop Languillat, has been this year transferred to the vast Vicariat of Kien-nang. Bishop Du Bar who has succeeded him appears likewise to be full of zeal for the excellent Society of the Holy Childhood, and takes the greatest care to support and spread it in every possible way. He proposes to send you himself more extended details upon the subject at some more favourable time, but he thinks it well that I should lay before you some particulars of the present condition of the Society in the Mission of Eastern Tche-ly.

The Society of the Holy Childhood has made wonderful progress during the last few years. Thanks to the abundant help which you have sent us from Europe, we have been able to open, and perfectly organise in a very short time three orphanages, two for boys and one for girls, six schools, and three dispensaries. The number of doctors who go about the towns and villages baptising dying children has also greatly increased. At the same time the missionaries take all possible means for animating the zeal and fervour of the Christians, and endeavouring to inspire them with a holy rivalry with the faithful in Europe, in order to increase the number of blessed little angels who, baptised in the article of death, are sent by the Holy Childhood from earth to heaven.

With this object in view, an association has been formed amongst the faithful here, exactly similar to the *Angelic Society*, which by a happy combination unites in itself and admirably seconds the double end of the *Propagation of the Faith* and the Holy Childhood. The associates devote and consecrate themselves with ardour to the baptism of dying children; they study with particular interest the most appropriate rules for their conduct, and take the measures which they find most favourable to success. At the same time they suffer no opportunity to escape which may present itself for exhorting adult pagans, making them love the truths of the faith, and so gaining them to religion and eternal happiness. By this means the number of baptisms of dying children has greatly increased, whilst we can also reckon many recently converted families, who, vanquished by the pious and efficient persuasions of

our baptisers, have broken their idols, banished superstition, and fervently embraced the faith. These Christians whom such an association renders very ardent in gaining souls to God, understand how to get into the houses of the pagans, and under the pretext of friendship or of pious care for the sick, they make use of every opportunity for gaining their hearts in the first instance to themselves, and then to God and religion. In order to animate our Christians to this good work, and help them to attain their end, they are frequently exhorted on the excellence and great merit of the work. They are furnished with medicine which they administer gratuitously to the children on whom they attend, and in proportion to the number of dying children whom they baptise, they occasionally receive from the missionary some recompense in the form of a picture, a rosary, a medal, a crucifix, or some other object of devotion highly prized by our Chinese. It is beautiful to see the transports of joy with which those who have baptised dying children hasten to meet the missionary when he arrives at a Christian settlement to give a mission. One cries out joyfully : " Father, I have baptised four children since the last mission, and they are all gone to heaven ; " another tells that he has baptised ten, fifteen, twenty ; another more fortunate has got up to thirty, forty, or more ; there is one who has distinguished himself more than any other, and has even been able to baptise sixty, seventy, or even sometimes 100. What a joy to have so many new protectors in heaven. But this is not all ; they ask on their knees for some object of devotion as a reward, and rise not till their request is complied with. On seeing them so satisfied with their presents, several other Christians threw themselves on their knees to obtain something similar, but the missionary, inflexible to their solicitations, begins with an affable air to ask a few questions. " Have you the certificate of merit ? Have you baptised any children ? Have you brought over any new catechumens to the faith ? " Blushing, and with excuses, the reply is—" No. " Then the missionary continues, " You know the rule ; no merit, no reward ; courage ! do all you can to baptise children and gain catechumens, and on my next visit you shall have a beautiful crucifix, or the rosary for which you now ask. " Thus it often happens that one who deserved nothing, sets himself resolutely to work, and on the return of the missionary joyfully presents some new catechumen, or tells him with what address he has contrived to get into pagan houses and baptise dying children. The schools and orphanages supported by the Holy Childhood are our chief objects of interest. Their welfare is attended to with great diligence in spite of the great expense they are to us, and which so far absorbs the annual aid sent to us

from Europe, that we are obliged to limit both the number of masters and necessarily that of adopted children. It is impossible to know all the good which is done by schools and orphanages; the little ones who escape death after their baptism are brought up from their earliest years on the pure milk of piety and religion, and as they increase in years they grow in faith like the children of the best Christian families.

The children whose dispositions seem suitable, apply themselves to study in order to become baptisers, catechists, masters—the apostles of their country; whilst those whose qualifications are different, take up trades, and labour that they may be able as excellent Christians to gain a living for themselves. Not only are the Christians of the country surprised when they observe the affectionate and paternal solicitude which is displayed towards the poor children in our schools, who are the outcasts of paganism, and deprived of all other succour; at seeing the virtue, the good manners, the order and discipline which prevail amongst them; but even the pagans, laying down their prejudices, begin to entertain feelings of love and esteem for the Catholic religion, and send their little ones to our schools. Their hearts are insensibly penetrated by the beauty of religion, they become our friends, and are more disposed for complete conversion. A still greater benefit which we derive from our orphanages, is that they are a powerful means for spreading and ingrafting the true spirit of the faith, and the practice of religion both amongst the pagan population who had not the least idea of it, and the new converts for whom it was very difficult to procure solid religious instruction. The reason of this is, that it often happens that one, two, or more families, scattered here and there in the midst of pagans, come to a knowledge of the faith and desire to embrace it, but it is difficult for them to learn perfectly either the truths or the necessary practices of religion, either on account of their distance from villages where the faith is already established, or because from want of education they cannot gain instruction from religious books. But Providence has provided a means at once efficacious and easy; they send their children to the orphanage, and these having been baptised and well instructed in the faith and practices of religion, return full of fervour to their own country, there to fill the place of masters and apostles in their own families. Religion being thus deeply rooted in one spot, communicates itself by degrees from family to family, and the Holy Childhood in this manner assists in the prompt and solid propagation of the faith. Facts attest these happy results. To speak only of the orphanage of St. Stanislaus, which was opened nearly three years ago in Xem-Tcheou; it has already instructed in the faith,

baptised, and sent back to their pagan villages many of these young people belonging to families of new converts, and who employ themselves with rare piety and great devotion in teaching Christian doctrine with the prayers and practices of religion to their own families and other catechumens. Of the twenty children who are now in the orphanage, ten have been sent thither by the parents of catechumens and neophytes, who desire that they should return home well instructed in the faith, and even those idolaters who cannot be converted, rather than kill their new-born children when in want of subsistence, come during the night, and sometimes even in broad daylight, to lay them at our door, or in the neighbourhood of the orphanage, hoping that we shall be touched with compassion and take them under our care. This high opinion of our orphanages is a consequence of the good management under which they are carried on. But reserving for another opportunity a particular account of each of the establishments of the Holy Childhood in this Vicariat, and a more lengthened history of the satisfactory progress of the boys' orphanages, I must at least send you some particulars about the orphanage of the Immaculate Conception, recently opened in Xem-Tcheou for the little girls brought up by the funds of the Holy Childhood. In default of European sisters, four single Chinese women have taken its direction. The rule is the same as that followed in similar establishments when in full prosperity. The food is frugal and in small quantities, but is all of the kind customary in the country. The building which is recent is near the church of the faithful, is modest in appearance, but kept with great cleanliness and care. It is suitably arranged for regular domestic discipline, and adjoining is a large garden, which serves both for labour and useful recreation. There are not at present more than twenty-three girls, mostly very young, four or five only having passed the age of fifteen. The superintendents take particular care to instruct and confirm these children in faith and piety, and to teach them the employments belonging to their sex. Order, cleanliness, and all that will render them excellent Christian women being very anxiously inculcated. For more than a year they have been employed in spinning cotton, weaving cloth, making their own clothes, plaiting girdles, and in making the silken capes which are in use amongst them. It is very pleasant to see them all assembled in the large work-room, earnestly and diligently employed in their respective labours, and at the same time singing the praises of God in joyful harmony, or reciting the prayers which they have learned. These are the blessed fruits of the Holy Childhood, which is thus able to gather souls from the refuse of a pagan nation, to the glory of God and

honour of religion. Four of these children have already returned to their neophyte families, spreading the good seed of the faith deposited by the Holy Childhood in their hearts, and another has this year made a suitable and advantageous marriage.

Christian parents consider it an honour and a special favour to obtain the young girls of the orphanage in marriage for their sons. But that all may be for the advantage of these orphans, we make it a condition that the Christian husband shall practice his religion in earnest, bear an excellent character, and have sufficient income to be able to live respectably with his wife, without her being obliged to get her bread by going for employment to pagan families. The marriage of one of the girls of the orphanages has this year been concluded in this satisfactory manner, with a young school-master belonging to a lately converted family in easy circumstances. The wedding was celebrated with great honour to religion, and the effect was excellent. Christians and idolaters equally admired and praised the maternal care for the orphans inspired by the Catholic religion.

Accept, Gentlemen, these short sketches respecting the Society of the Holy Childhood in our Missions of Eastern Tchely, and pray come largely, generously to our aid, that we may be able to maintain and still more develop the numerous works we have undertaken for the greater glory of God.

Pray accept, &c.,

Gaetan Stevani, Miss. Apost.

BELGIAN MISSION IN CHINA.

The Belgian Mission in China, of which we spoke in the last number of the *Annals*, has just published a First Report, addressed by the four priests, who after leaving Brussels arrived safely at their respective destinations in Mongolio, the whole of which is under the charge of the Abbe Verbist, the superior of the Mission. We give with pleasure the following analysis, extracted from the account printed in 1865.

The four missionaries first went to Rome where they had an audience with the Sovereign Pontiff. "Ah," exclaimed Pius IX, as they entered, "here are my good Chinese! So you are come to Rome to ask the blessing of heaven upon the arduous mission you are about to undertake. You have done well my friends, for yours is a difficult enterprise. I do not wish to conceal from you that the life of a missionary is rough, his task is a heavy and ungrateful one; I

know something on this subject by my own experience, for when I was young I was a missionary in America. But every difficulty may be surmounted with the help of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself calls to you from the extremities of China, and He says: 'The harvest is great, but the labourers are few;' you reply: 'Here we are, Lord, ready to answer Thy call.' Yes; you will succeed. Great events are preparing in China. We receive the most satisfactory accounts from that country; villages are converted by hundreds. Go full of courage, and lend a strong hand to the devoted labourers who have preceded you; and may Almighty God assist you. May He bless your relations and the friends whom you have left. May His holy angel accompany you in your journeys, sustain you in your labours, and one day lead you back safe to your families, or if it should be His holy will, translate you from the land to which you are now exiling yourselves to your heavenly country."

The missionaries say—and we can easily imagine it—that it is impossible to describe what they felt whilst the Holy Father expressed his good wishes. As he pronounced these words: *May Almighty God assist you*, his features suddenly assumed an expression of faith and confidence so lively, so ardent, that you would have said that his eyes pierced the heavens, and contemplated the divine Majesty on His throne.

Having embarked at Civita-Vecchia on the 14th September, they had to endure many privations during their voyage of three months. Soon after their arrival they wrote as follows:

"Regarding the establishment of the Holy Childhood at Hong-Kong," they say, "whether you enter the towns or the most miserable villages, if there are Missionaries you may feel sure you will find an establishment of the Holy Childhood. If you ask permission to visit it, you will not be refused, and you will find in it thousands of children who have been snatched from misery and death; you will find the little infants under the care of wet-nurses who are regularly paid, and the elder ones, not only receiving a suitable Christian education, but learning from their childhood all kinds of useful trades."

To understand the immense, the incalculable good which these establishments are likely to do in China, you must consider that every child placed in one of them is, if not an apostle, at least a soul snatched from error.

Honour be to the good little children of Europe, for this work amongst the little Chinese is theirs. It is the alms which they levy upon their pocket money, which alone enable the Missionary and the Sisters of Charity to support this admirable Society.

The residence of the Missionaries is at Sy-man-se. This is a village containing about eighteen hundred inhabitants; all of whom, except three families, have the happiness to be Catholics. But besides this village and a residence in the east and another in the west of Mongolia, they have the care of five or six thousand Christians disseminated through innumerable villages, situated some of them many days distant. The Missionaries therefore may well end their letter by saying: "We beseech you to send us as soon as possible a party of zealous co-operators."

We beg all the associates to beseech our Lord that He will be pleased to inspire many more Missionaries to go and labour for His honour in distant China.

From the Rev. Jandard, Lazarist, Missionary in Honan, to the
Director of the Society.

Nan-Yang, Aug. 23rd, 1865.

Reverend Sir,

For more than three months Honan has been in possession of two or three bands of Mentzees who are practising their customary devastations. For more than ten days we have been shut up in the town of Nan-yang, without any exit but towards the west. We have hired another dwelling, part of which belongs to the Seminary, whilst our former abode is entirely devoted to the orphans of the Holy Childhood whom we receive every day. After Mass last Sunday a pagan woman arrived bringing us a little girl she had just found. Her mouth and throat were filled with asses' hair, so that she could not utter the least cry, though her tears and convulsions showed how horribly she suffered. While one of us hastened to baptise her, the other endeavoured to remove from her mouth the hair which was suffocating her. We christened her Anne, in honour of S. Joachim, whose feast we were celebrating that day. The happy Anne went that very day to rejoin her patron in heaven. Two pagan women having met near the place where the carpenter was making her coffin, began to discuss the merits and demerits of the Christians, and quite a quarrel arose; one of them finding great fault with us, and the other strongly taking up our defence. If the prejudices of the pagans against us are not yet entirely overcome it is yet certain that our reputation improves every day. Although of the thirteen divisions which form the department, Nan-yang-fae is the town in which there is the smallest number of catechumens, I by no means despair of seeing it bring forth in good time its fruits of salvation. The good

works of the Holy Childhood will cause them to germinate and ripen.

The little Anne has had brothers and sisters. On St. Vincent's day we baptised six children, four of whom had been saved from the hands of the Mentzees. Some days before we had sent six others to Kio-chan from eight to ten years old, who were also to be baptised. If the number of Baptisms appears this year to have decreased, it is because we have been obliged to employ our Baptisers as preaching catechists; for as, thanks be to God, the number of catechumens is always increasing, the Missionaries are no longer sufficient in number. As for the new Christian settlements which are continually being formed, and we reckon ten of these within the last two years, they almost always owe the origin to the Baptisers, no doubt helped by the prayers of the little angels sent by them to heaven.

I write to you in the midst of confusion and disorder. You will believe that it is allowable to feel some agitation in the middle of a town, surrounded by innumerable brigands, with a wind from S. W. which fills the room with the smell of conflagration. Meanwhile, the garrison smokes opium, ascends the ramparts from time to time to look at the fire, fires off a few cannons to salute the brigands, and then returns to its noble apathy. This is the nature of the Chinese, and nothing can rouse it but the hope of gain, which is precisely what renders the brigands so formidable.

It is a consolation to know that your prayers will be offered for the conversion of these poor people and for the return of peace, without which we can merely form projects.

Pray accept, &c.,
Jandard.

COCHIN CHINA.

Sketch of the Savage tribe of Stiengs, by the Rev. Fr. Le Mee,
Apost. Missionary at Saigon.

We believe that our associates will read with pleasure the following details, extracted from a long memoir by one of our worthy Missionaries, upon the statistics and natural history of the country he inhabits. As we read the interesting and instructive details, we cannot fail to admire the richness and marvellous variety of the gifts of the Creator of nature, and to feel yet more drawn to the assistance of our evangelical labourers in their endeavours to lead

the poor people of countries, so liberally endowed into the ways of Christian civilization, that is to say, of true progress and real happiness. May, 1865.

Along the whole length of the western part of the Annamite empire, lower Cochin-China and Gambogia as far as China, between this same Annamite empire and the people of Laos, in the midst of mountains, immense forests and myriads of animals of every kind, there exists a great many savage tribes, differing much from the Chinese and Cochin-chinese type, and appearing all to have one common origin. The pure blooded Gambogians, and particularly the ancient inhabitants of Ciampa, appear to have the same type. We shall only here speak of the tribe of the Stiengs, confided to our care and amongst whom we have for the last six years established an abode at the foot of that cross which is the sign of salvation to the whole world. We must remark, however, that the information we give about this tribe applies almost equally to all the others.

The territory inhabited by the tribe of the Siengs is bounded on the north by Benang and Candio or Bi; on the west by Gambogia, and on the east and south by the Cochin-chinese provinces of Khanh-Hoa, Bien, Thuan, and Bien Hoa. It may contain about 30,000 people spread over a space of about 10,000 square miles. The southern part is but little marked; it is a gentle ascending slope in continuation of the plains of lower Cochin-china and Gambogia. The northern part is covered with hills more or less abrupt, but without high mountains, whilst the eastern part on the side of Cochin-china presents a picturesque appearance from its chains of steep hills, many of the peaks of which shoot up to a great height; the whole being crowned by ever verdant forests.

The year is divided into two distinct seasons, the rainy season and that of fine weather. The rains begin in April and continue till November, though the beginning and end of the season generally give some very fine days, and the rains, though frequent, especially at night, not being then continual, it is possible to travel till towards the middle of July, and sometimes even during the early days of August. Later it becomes more difficult to cross the country. At the beginning of September, or even towards the end of August all the cataracts of heaven open at the same time, the streams and rivers swell, overflow and become mighty floods. Numberless torrents are formed which rush impetuously on; all low spots are submerged, and the soaked ground, not to speak of the avalanches of rain which inundate it, offers to the traveller a very insecure road. It is therefore prudent to remain at home till towards the end of October or November, for though there are occasional fine

days before this time, the roads are by no means good, the waters not at once retreating, and the soil requires a time of rest to recover from the effects of so rude, so abundant and so prolonged a bath.

The dry season lasts through the remainder of the year, this is the season for fine weather, for though there is not an entire cessation of rain during this time, it falls in small quantities and very rarely. In the dry seasons of 1859 and 1860, it rained only twice during six successive months. During this season when the atmosphere is so intensely hot in the day-time, so abundant a dew is formed at night, that at sunrise the silver drops distil from the leaves of the forest as if they had just been moistened by a heavy rain. It is thus that by the direction of a beneficent Providence, the extreme heat which would burn everything up, is happily tempered by the great freshness of the nights. This is also the reason why vegetation, though much less active towards the end of this season, is never entirely stopped. It only proceeds with a much slower step, till the wet season returns, when it resumes its strength and vigour.

The months of December and January are the time when the thermometer stands at its lowest, and then during the night and especially in the morning at sunrise, the cold is so great that you shiver as if amongst the snows of Greenland. This is the more sensibly felt, because during the day and particularly about two o'clock, the heat is stifling, the thermometer rising to 30° and even higher, so that in the night we are glad of good woollen clothing, lined and furred, whilst in the day-time we actually perspire in a simple light cotton dress. The savages, who are without the means for making a similar change of costume, manage the matter by lighting fagots in their huts, which burn from night till morning, and refreshing themselves by frequent ablutions during the day.

If I understood exotic botany I should have much to say about the trees, shrubs and plants, which cover the surface of the ground with extraordinary luxuriance. The vegetation is less abundant in some places than in others, but I have never seen any spot completely barren. In the southern part are glades in which there are but few trees, but their place is filled up by herbaceous plants whose height is often greater than that of a man. Everywhere else it is forest. In some places there are only trees of great height. In others only bamboos, elsewhere trees and bamboos growing altogether. The forests in some places are not inaccessible and can be penetrated by the curious traveller, but in others it is so encumbered with ivy, binduends, and other climbing knotted thorny shrubs and plants, all crossed, woven and entangled

together that the smallest animal could hardly find an opening to pass through.

Amongst all these trees the incomparable bamboo with its many varieties deserves the first place, on account of the many uses to which it is applied by the inhabitants of the country. It forms at least three quarters of the materials employed in the construction of their huts; some are even formed entirely of them. They are also used for the palisades which surround their villages and other places. They are made into pots, jars, pitchers, bottles, drinking glasses. Tobacco and betel boxes are made of them, panniers, all sorts of baskets, handles for hatchets, knives and other instruments; lances, pikes, hoes, arrows and other arms; ear-rings, pipes, buckles, fishing tackle, and a thousand other things, in a word for everything you wish even to the very cheap matches which light by friction The way in which these matches are produced and used is as follows. A piece of bamboo, not too green, is split in two, a fibre is drawn out about the thickness of packthread; a small hole nearly round is made in one of the pieces, round this piece the thread is twisted, and then passed through the hole, and the two ends being pulled quickly with the fingers sufficient friction is produced to set the edge of the small opening on fire. This is the lucifer match of the savages, and it is the more convenient that it is found everywhere; costs nothing, and is not dangerous.

If the bamboo carries off the palm from all other trees, on account of its universal utility, there is another which deserves the prize for solidity and durability. This is a kind of ebony wood, which the savages rightly call the king of woods. They call it Tam-tiam like the Gambogians, whilst the Annamites know it as Cay-trai. When first cut it is yellowish with a tint of green, but it becomes black with time. It is compact, heavy and tough, is greatly respected by the white ants, and resists all the variations or extremes of temperature either under water or under ground, and is in one word, incorruptible. This tree, which grows to a large size, and little used by the savages on account of the time and labour which are required to work it, is greatly esteemed in Cochin-china as masts for vessels, for boats, and particularly for coffins. This incorruptible wood is not found in the forests, but is met with amongst the Stiengs in some abundance. There are many other species which are equally tough and hard and not inferior in durability.

I must also mention the oil tree which is common in these forests. When incisions are made in the lower part of the trunk, a considerable quantity of resinous oil flows out, which is a kind of

Turpen'ine, and is in great request in Gambogia, and still more in Cochin-china, for the caulking of barks and vessels. It is equally esteemed by Europeans, but the only use made of it by the savages is to form it into torches after the manner of candles. The wood is quite equal to that of the beautiful Norway pine, so much thought of in Europe. It sometimes attains a prodigious size; at a few hundred yards from our residence, there is one which measures seven yards in circumference at its base. It does not assume the pyramidal form of the fir, but the trunk continues of the same size to a considerable height; the Gambogians and Annamites take advantage of this for forming large barks out of one piece of wood, obtaining also a great quantity of planks of which they build still larger vessels, using them also as a cheap material for the insides of their houses.

I must not omit to mention the Vine. This plant, so necessary and so precious in Europe, is not cultivated in this country. That which grows amongst the Stiengs deserves attention; it grows wild in great abundance in certain parts of the forest, every spot around our abode is overrun with it. The tendrils cling to the trees and particularly to the bamboos, and it rises to their height. These vines are loaded with bunches of grapes, many of which weigh a stone and a half. The ripe grapes are black with a reddish tinge, and contain many large stones; they are juicy and acid. We have not hitherto endeavoured to cultivate this plant, but we are now attempting it, and do not despair of success. The savages eat the unripe fruit, and as birds and insects also feed upon it, it is not easy to find any quantity which has been allowed to come to maturity. We have often found it useful in making excellent vinegar.

In the midst of these boundless forests it may be easily imagined that there are plenty of wild beasts. There are elephants, rhinoceros, buffalos, three kinds of ox, one of which attains sometimes to the height of the elephant, (it can hardly be known to our European naturalists,) two kinds of bears, tigers large and small, leopards, panthers, wolf-dogs, boars, a great variety of stags, some very large fallow deer, goats, rabbits, squirrels, porcupines, little monnats, ant eaters, otters, a great variety of apes, some of which are very pretty, gibbons, or monkeys without tails, and a thousand other kinds of quadrupeds which I do not know and many of which are doubtless quite unknown even to naturalists.

As to birds, they are equally numerous; pheasants, peacocks, fowls, partridges and quails of several kinds, cranes, pigeons, several kinds of doves which feed by thousands on the rice fields, a great variety of parrots with splendid plumage, magpies, toucans

vultures, crows, kites, hawks, owls, a variety of aquatic fowls, amongst which snipes, teal and ducks are in great esteem for the table. Many others might be added, but my want of knowledge in ornithology obliges me to stop. Yet I must mention a kind of magpie of a shining black with yellow beak and feet, with a splendid collar of the same colour. This pretty bird is easily tamed, and is then well pleased with the society of mankind. Rice boiled in water suits him very well, but the small pimenta is a real treat to him; he dreads rain and wind and is so delicate that if he is not taken great care of he very soon dies. What makes this bird very remarkable, apart from his natural beauty, is that he learns to speak the language of the country so clearly and distinctly that the natives themselves mistake him. He is clever also at imitating any sounds which he may hear; I have myself heard him counterfeit the neighing of a horse, the cries of a dog fighting with others, or beaten by his master, and other similar sounds. The swallow visits the Stiengs during the fine season and the sparrow, that faithful companion of the dwellings of man, is not unknown to them, though he is not found everywhere; whilst bats both large and small are in great abundance. Every evening they have a grand mosquito hunt in my room, sometimes paying, poor beasts, with their lives for the service they render me, for my dog Bodilard, and his good friend, my cat, Minette, make no scruple of subjecting them to their teeth.

The class of reptiles cedes neither in variety nor number to the two just mentioned. There are different kinds of tortoises and a great variety of lizards, some of which are rich and splendid in colour. I will only mention the winged dragon, and a kind which is equal in size to a middle-sized crocodile. Amongst the serpeats the colours and shades are most beautiful, and the varieties in form and proportion, wonderful. The boa is one of them, but he is here the enemy only of ducks and fowls; his thefts amongst these birds are, too, always discovered, since after having swallowed whole one of these inhabitants of the poultry yard, he finds himself so oppressed that he remains in his place as if he had expected to pay with his life for the crime he has committed; and this never fails to be the case, the savage that day enjoying a double ration—the flesh of both the eater and the eaten. There is also the cobra di capello, so much dreaded on account of its poison, which is as large as a middle size boa. You may meet with scorpions, centipedes, a variety of spiders, some of them of extraordinary size, frogs, one species of which is remarkable for its great agility and also for its power of climbing up trees, a fact which I should never have believed had I not seen it with my own eyes.

No one could describe the myriads of butterflies and different insects which everywhere abound, and a great many of which present to the astonished view the brilliancy and variety of colour of the richest gems. Certain winged insects produce during the night a magical effect by the brilliant light given out by the phosphorescence of their bodies. If all these creatures are of important interest to the naturalist, the honey bee is so to the savage for a far different reason; not that he often eats the honey, he takes it, but rarely, but he gets from it a vast quantity of wax which is the most important article in his commerce with Gambogia and Cochin-china. These bees, which are of smaller size than those of Europe, are wild, and are very numerous at the time when they are labouring in the formation of their wonderful dwellings which they suspend from the branches of large trees, particularly the oil tree. They do not remain the whole year, but emigrate. The wax is gathered in the greatest abundance in June, and at that time the Cochin-chinese and Gambogians flock to the upper country for the purchase of this wax, which they seek with great avidity.

I shall not stop to speak of the too numerous family of ants which infest every article in our houses, though these creatures—the white ants excepted—are more troublesome than dangerous. As for the latter they are the scourge of the country on account of their ravages. They devour paper, stuffs, leaves, straw, wood, in fact every produce of the vegetable world. Everything here swarms with them to such a degree, that except the places where there is water, there is not a corner in which they do not abound. And the activity they display is wonderful; whatever precautions we may take, they always, in the end, destroy quantities of things, not to mention that they destroy even our huts, and oblige us in spite of our frequent repairs, to rebuild them from the foundation every two or three years. It is true that the incorruptible wood which is exempt from the attacks of the white ants is found in our neighbourhood, but we have not yet been wealthy enough to make use of it in our buildings, having been obliged to content ourselves with bamboo or other common wood closer at hand; later we hope to do better.

Fish are to be found wherever there is water, the smallest lake, the shallowest stream furnishes it. There is an abundance of the larger kind in certain natural ponds in the plains of the south-eastern part, not far from our dwelling, but wherever the water is at all deep, crocodiles and caymans cause alarm to the fishermen.

The means of communication are not at all pleasant, no boat or bridge is ever met with for crossing the rivers or streams. Some-

times you may be fortunate enough to meet with a broken or uprooted tree lying across the water. Here is a bridge ready prepared, but, as it is without rails and often very narrow, take care to keep your balance as you walk over it, if not, you will make a slip which will at least cause you a plunge, and perhaps some bruises into the bargain. In following the pathways, it is not at all a good plan to be looking into the air, for the trunks of trees, roots, stones, and holes roughly remind you to direct your eyes towards the ground. At the same time you must take care of the branches and thorns which often carry away your head-dress, or hold you fast by a corner of your garment. I say this for the benefit of Europeans, for the savages run along these ways with the rapidity of deer, fearing no damage to their clothing, which is indeed hardly to be seen upon their bodies. Yet it must be owned that tough as is their skin, it sometimes receives a scratch; but they are used to this.

Besides these pathways, there are other roads, in the southern part alone, which are wide enough to allow a sort of carriage to pass, but to believe the possibility of this you must have yourself seen these vehicles traverse them. These roads are all frightful and detestable. Nothing is more common than to see a vehicle suddenly turn on its side or its back, throwing its contents to the ground, and well it is if you do not find yourself in a slough or a stream. It is a still more common occurrence for the conveyance to break, and then, wonderful to say, an axe, or a large knife is all that is required again to set the machine in motion. The forest supplies wood and resin, and nothing more is needed, for not an atom of iron is used in their construction. A very few of these savages make these carriages, but in general they purchase them from the Gambogians, who, as well as the Chiams make a great number of them.

I have not yet remarked upon one of the inconveniences to which pedestrians are subject, and which is by no means a small one. During the rainy season, and even long after, the forests are infested by a kind of small leech which is sometimes so abundant that the ground is literally covered with them. They also fix themselves on the shrubs, and it is curious to see, how, at the first sound of a footstep, they all raise themselves up in readiness to fix on the feet of the passenger. In vain you run, strike with your heel, move about and shake yourself, in a moment your clothes are full of them, they even attack your head, and as they set to work without delay you are presently covered with blood. The savages, however, know how to get rid of them. Having no clothes, and their skin not being very thin, they can scrape themselves at their ease

with a branch of bamboo, which they keep in constant movement during their journey. This does very well for them, but as to us poor Europeans, we must either endure the sanguinary trial, or take the precaution to fasten our garments hermetically from head to foot. When the great heat has dried up the humidity of the forests, these creatures disappear, except in certain spots which are always damp.....

This account is to be continued in the next Annals for January, 1867.

EASTERN INDIA.

From Brother Antony Mary, Capuchin Missionary Apostolic, to
the Director of the Society.

Reverend Sir,

I take the liberty to address you with a few hasty lines whilst suffering the deepest sorrow. God has tried us severely. Dr. Hartmann, our beloved, our holy bishop, has just been taken from us, after only two days illness. He died on the 24th April, at 8 o'clock p.m. Who can console us? Where shall we find a bishop who will resemble him, and be to us what he has been? Our only consolation is in thinking that his soul is in heaven, whilst his mortal remains repose in the cathedral of Patna, which he loved so much, and for which he suffered so severely. The illustrious deceased, one of the principal supports of the Indian Church, the ornament of his order and the glory of the Catholics of his own country, died at the age of 63, after forty-four years of religious profession, having exercised the episcopal functions at Patna and Bombay during twenty years.

Who can doubt that he has gone to receive his crown? He repeated often, "There is no purgatory for bishops; at their death it is either heaven or hell." His life was the life of a saint, and his death was the same.

Bishop Hartmann died in the breach like a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ. He died exhausted by apostolic labours and fatigues. Last Sunday, April 24th, he went to Jainalpore, eighty miles distant, to preside at a meeting for taking the necessary measures for the erection of a chapel. He was seized with spasms and vomiting during the night. The doctor was immediately called, but all that medical science could do was useless, and on Tuesday evening I had the sad satisfaction of administering the holy Sacraments to him,

in the midst of the most acute sufferings. It was indeed a beautiful sight, to behold the holy prelate stretch his trembling hands towards the most Holy Sacrament and receive it with celestial ardour. It was like assisting at the last Communion of St. Jerome. The agony lasted but a quarter of an hour, and his lordship expired quietly at a quarter past eight.

The funeral was as solemn a celebration as could be made in the midst of a pagan population. How was my heart torn when the children came one by one to kiss for the last time the hand which had so often been lifted over them in blessing them. It was impossible to behold unmoved the poor sisters bathed in tears, or the orphans whose sobs and cries filled the church, and when at last the coffin was lowered into the vault of the cathedral our happiness seemed to go down with it.

But we do not mourn as those who have no hope; we rejoice for him in the midst of our distress, for he has entered into the rest so well deserved by an apostolic life of more than forty years labour. The words of his lordship so often repeated, when we endeavoured to make him spare himself a little are now realised, "I shall have plenty of time for rest when I am in my grave." He well fulfilled all the duties of the pastoral charge of which the crozier is the emblem, and which is so well described in this verse :

Attrahe per cursum, medio rege punge per imum!

Our dear associates, whilst they weep the death of a pontiff so devoted to the Holy Childhood, may rejoice in the thought that a new patron has been given to them in heaven, for all here, and numbers in Europe, look upon the illustrious deceased as a saint. The religious sisters of Bankipore requested of me the favour to be allowed to have care of his lordship's body during the night which preceded the funeral. I found out the reason for this request at the moment of interment, for through the tears that filled my eyes it appeared to me that something was wanting to the venerable face of our holy pontiff. I found that a considerable portion of his white and venerable beard had disappeared. It was easy to discover the pious culprits, but restitution was impossible.

How solemn and sublime must have been the meeting of the holy pontiff with the souls of the numerous pagan children who owed to him the happiness of possessing God for ever. Let the dear associates weep with us, but rejoice with them.

Accept, &c.,

Brother Antony Mary,
Missionary Apost. Capuchin.

ANNALS
OF THE
Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 75.—JANUARY, 1867.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Eloi Cusi, Bishop of Piene, Coadjutor of Chang-Tong, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

(From the Latin.)

Chang-kong-Zian-fu, 20 Feb. 1866.

After expressing his gratitude to the Central Council for the grant voted in favour of the Vicariat of Chang-Tong, the missionary bishop proceeds to give the following particulars respecting the works connected with the Holy Childhood in this Mission.

..... You are already aware that I built an orphanage for the reception of little girls at the beginning of the month of January of last year, and in December it was requisite that I should do my best to prepare a place for the reception of little boys. No sooner had the cold weather set in than my door was beset by boys from nine to fifteen years of age, forsaken by their parents, and in a condition which might move a heart of stone, begging to be admitted. They were bare-footed, bare-headed, and like little chimney sweeps, with more resemblance to brutes than to men. Some were wrapped in some old ragged clothing, some in tattered dresses only reaching to the knees, others in still worse plight, and all of them stiff with cold, and with such want of cleanliness that their state excited at the same time both pity and disgust.

I began therefore to receive these unfortunate creatures, and as they arrived I sent out and bought left-off garments in which to dress them. Then I sent them to the warm baths, where for a few pennies they were washed and their heads shaved. On their

return I could not recognise them, they were transformed into pretty Chinese. The report having spread that I had received little abandoned boys, as many as five or six a day sometimes came imploring me to receive them, as otherwise they must, they said, perish from cold. Most of them are really orphans, whose parents have either died of sickness or want, or have been massacred by the brigands. Yet there are cases where a widowed mother has married again, leaving her children upon the public roads; others in which the mother having died, the father, given up to vice, has left them half naked to beg for alms and to obtain their daily bread by means of cries and importunity.

Charity, both natural and religious, urged me to receive a much greater number of these forsaken children than my means permitted. The clothing which I had purchased not being sufficient to cover and protect them from the inclemency of the season, I wrote to Father Joachim Orsi, who is all charity for these poor orphans, to procure more clothing for me, enjoining him to the strictest possible economy. A fortnight afterwards two strong young men arrived with a cart full of garments, estimated at £14. It would not have been possible to practise greater economy, for he told me in his letter that the whole had been obtained from the charity of the good Christians of that ancient residence.*

The garments arrived on Saturday evening, and on Sunday the orphans, boys and girls, were clothed from head to foot. To me this was really a comfort, it was a beautiful lesson in charity to the Christians who were present, and it was a glory to our religion in the eyes of all the pagans.

It was a pleasure on Sunday to see these little boys going from one court to the other intoxicated with delight, and parading the clothes they so much admired, and to hear the dialogues passing between them. "It is two years since I have had any clothes properly made." "And three since I have." "As for me, I have never had any clothes so well made, or so pretty," and so forth. Indeed it was quite an amusement for us all.

Having charged myself with the care of these children, it now seemed necessary to find a place in which to establish them. There was an empty house outside the town which would conveniently accommodate at least sixty boys. It might be purchased by the Holy Childhood for £200. Having arranged everything I gave up the care of the orphans to a native priest, very fit for this office, and they then took possession of the house to the number of twenty-two. They have already learned the Pater and

* See Father Joachim's letter, which comes next.

Ave and Credo, and the morning and evening prayers, and the two eldest begin to serve the Mass.

A few days after the reception of these poor abandoned children, a woman came to the gate asking for her nephew; the poor little boy had hardly heard of this when he began to cry, and refused to go to her. I obliged him, however, to show himself at the door, as a proof that he was in a better condition than he had been before. No sooner did she see him than she cried out; "Come home with me, my dear nephew, I am always thinking of you." The child replied by a very decided "No," and then added: "If you really loved me you would have received me into your house after the death of my father and mother. You have often seen me begging in the streets, and you have never taken pity on me. You have not once even given me shelter in your house, and now, because you find that I have been given clothing and food and am learning to study in this place, you invite me to come to you. No, you wish me no good." The woman, quite confused, retired, murmuring, and the little boy ran full of joy to relate the answer which he had made to her, adding that she only wanted him that she might strip him of the clothes we had given him. I reproved him for this rash judgment, but I could not convince him of its falsity, nor did I entirely differ in his opinion.

A few days after the entrance of the orphans into their new house, a fine handsome boy about eleven years old came to me. He was barefoot, and had nothing but a little cloak over his shoulders; he was shivering with cold, and throwing himself on his knees, begged me to take him in. He said he had had neither father nor mother for more than a month. He did not seem to be a beggar like the others. Seeing his pitiable condition, I had him washed and dressed, and sent him to the orphanage, but after a few days I was informed that he had both father and mother. I advertised the director of the orphanage of this, and he took back the poor child all in tears, to his parents. The parents however declared that they no longer owned him as their son, and it then appeared that on account of some small theft of which he had been guilty, the father had intended to bury him alive, but that at the entreaty of some of his neighbours, he had changed the punishment of death into that of expulsion. He had therefore stripped him of his clothes, and had driven him far away from his house almost naked. This poor boy, as well as all the other orphans who have lately come, have been hitherto very docile and obedient, and seem very zealous in learning the duties of a christian. When a new guest arrives they immediately teach him to make the sign of the

cross. Among the first who came there was one who could by no means be induced to make or to learn to make this Christian sign, whilst others who came later had already acquired the habit. His companions accused him to me of being possessed. So I said to him: "If you do not know how to make the sign of the cross tomorrow, I shall take off the clothes which have been given you, and you shall return to begging." At this threat he began to cry, and at once learned to make the sign of the cross.

The good which arises from gathering these poor forsaken children from the streets, is as important to civil society as to their souls, for those who escape perishing from cold or hunger grow up tall and strong, but if left without a trade, without resources and incapable of work, are fit for nothing but begging. This is the reason why young men of twenty or thirty years of age are seen in towns and commercial districts, going about in rags from one shop to another, and refusing to move till they have at least had a present of a sapec.

Instead of the two widows who had the care of the girls' orphanage, we have had this year two good and devoted single women, and the mother of one of them. These good Christians take care of the bodies and souls of our orphans with a perfect charity. I will relate to you one of the numerous instances of heroic chastity which have occurred amongst the young Christians whom we have admitted during the last five years. It happened last year. A young Christian of the district of Jai-Ghan-Fou, nineteen years old, and already promised in marriage, fell into the hands of brigands. The man who had carried her off attempted her virtue, but experiencing an heroic resistance, he drew his sword and threatened to kill her if she did not yield. "I am a Christian," said the girl, "and God forbids me to sin; you may kill me, for I shall not obey you." The brigand then gave her five strokes with his sabre, some upon the neck, some on the head, and then believing her dead he left her bathed in blood and extended on the ground. The brigands having left, this martyr to virginity was found by some of her relations, who seeing her still breathing, bandaged her five wounds, and carried her back to her house. When this heroic girl came to herself, she resolved to dedicate her virginity to God, and by dint of her entreaties she succeeded with the help of the missionary, in breaking off her engagement. Freed from her promise, she began her noviciate by making her vow of chastity at the time she entered it.

Thanks be to God we have still many conversions in the Christian settlements, where catechumens abound. I have had schools opened for the instruction of their children. Great expense and

fatigue are incurred in bringing this evangelical harvest to maturity. I recommend my four thousand and more catechumens to your prayers and those of our excellent associates. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect,

Your very humble servant,

✱ Fr. Eloi Cosi,

M. O. Bp. of Piene, Coadjutor.

From Fr. Joachim Orsi, M. O. to the Right Rev. Dr. Eloi Cosi,
Coadjutor of Chang-Tong.

(From the Latin.)

Xeah-Li-Choan, 26 Dec. 1865.

My Lord Bishop,

I have procured the clothing which your lordship charged me to have made for our orphans. You requested me to spare expense as much as possible; so as the aid which we get from Europe is insufficient to meet the expenses which are daily on the increase, I thought I would make an effort to stir up the charity of our Christians in spite of their poverty and want. I did my best to move their hearts in favour of these unfortunate little ones, and to induce them charitably to give some garments, to cover them and save them from the severity of the cold. After explaining to them how little we could do in this line, I showed them the great merit this small alms would acquire for them towards eternal life. The Lord was pleased to bless my words, and the emotion produced was so great, that in the short space of a week I received clothing enough to dress forty children from head to foot. It is true that most of these clothes are old and already worn, but they were so well mended before being sent to me, that they appear as good as new. Your lordship ought to know that many families took things from their own children, that they might clothe the poor little ones of Jesus Christ. If their alms bear no comparison either in quality or in quantity with those of our pious benefactors of Europe, they may at least compete with them in merit. Have they not in point of fact given more than their strength permitted? May God grant them an equivalent both in this life and the next.

The girls of all ages in our establishment work according to their capacity, and are never idle. The eldest, who is fifteen or sixteen, is the factotum of the house. She shows much more

ability than the others, and may become an excellent superior. If she continues always the same, very modest, humble, and obedient, and intends to remain in the house, I shall willingly permit this. The next in point of age is at present ill; she is under the care of a good pagan doctor who attends her gratuitously; I shall only have to make him a present after the Chinese manner. It seems as if the Lord intended to cure the man's soul in reward for his charity to this poor girl, for instead of showing the aversion he formerly did for our holy religion, he now speaks favourably of it; admiring the patience and charity shown by the three good women who keep the orphanage of the poor little ones, who have most of them been saved from the cruelty of their unnatural parents. He is astonished and edified at the sight of our indefatigable zeal in saving their bodies and souls, and is so much altered that he quite lately advised one of his sisters to give us a little girl, fifteen days old, whom she wished to kill, assuring her that we should treat her well. I received her, and baptised her under the name of Eugenie.

I have received more little girls this year than last, and if your lordship had plenty of money to give me I could take in still more.....The orphanage is already becoming too small for our wants. Next spring we shall have to decide whether to enlarge it, or to exchange it for another house which is larger and nearer to the church.....But with so little money what are we to do?

The mercy of our Lord and the wonderful interposition of Providence in behalf of our children, is continually visible. If our Lord sometimes afflicts their bodies it is for the cure of their souls. A Christian family of Li-Cia-Va sent to know if I would receive a little pagan, 10 years old. She had lost her mother, and was forsaken by every one, her father, who was very severe, having gone away to tow the barks at Tsin-Tsin. Fearing that the father, in his aversion for the Christian religion would claim his daughter when he returned, I recommended that they should keep the child till then. The father returned in about five months; he was asked whether he would give his child to the Christian Church, and his reply was a most decided refusal; but then he had not yet seen her. When he found that during his absence his daughter had become afflicted with a disgusting wound on the foot, more than half of which was in a state of gangrene, he said: "Let them have her, I do not want to see her again, I shall not know what to do with her; if the Christian Church does not want her, let her seek some other master, and if she does not find one she may die of hunger." Oh! the barbarity of an unnatural father, and oh! the mercy of our dear Saviour. I went to the child immediately on

her arrival; she had learnt whilst at Li-Cia-Va the common prayers and nearly the whole of two catechisms. I asked her if she came willingly: "Yes, quite so," she replied. "But what will you do," I said, "if you cannot be cured, and should remain lame?" She replied thus: "Will the Lord refuse my entrance to paradise because I have lost one of my feet? I am ready to lose the other also for the salvation of my soul, or even the whole of this useless body." "But, suppose your father on his return home had not allowed you to come here, what would you have done?" "This was my great dread. From the moment that I began to know God from learning the catechism, I gave him infinite thanks for having sent me this wound on my foot, as I hoped it would be the means of saving my soul. Ah! father, if you knew how I suffer! But I bear it willingly for the love of Jesus Christ who suffered so much for me." Here the poor child began to weep, and said, sobbing: "Oh! father, I have a great fear of dying and burning in hell...Please to baptise me at once; when I am baptised I shall be quite willing to die." "Yes, my child," I replied, "when you are cured and can come to church I will baptise you; and if you are at any time in danger I will come and baptise you. Will that do?" She replied by a very humble *tim mim* (I obey). Such beautiful sentiments in a child of ten years, who is hardly even a catechumen brought tears to my eyes, and I blessed the infinite mercy of God. I immediately sent for a Christian who is very clever in curing wounds of this kind, and in a few days he succeeded in stopping the gangrene which had already set in. He says she will be quite cured in fifteen or twenty days, but will have only half of her foot left. This is, in fact, of little importance, as the Chinese women, who lame their feet, always walk on their heels, and it will hardly be observed that this dear child is half lame. The consequence of all this is, that her father on seeing so much kindness shown to his child has altered his sentiments, and it is said that he will become a Christian also. He goes about repeating, "that a religion which inspires its professors with so much kindness cannot but be true."

The best instructed of the girls in the orphanage have been twice to Holy Communion this year, to fulfil the Easter duty and to gain the jubilee; and with so much true piety that most of the old Christians were put to shame. They are an example to all. They come to me every Sunday, and I always give them a little exhortation; they tell me of the labours of the week, I ask them questions upon the doctrines of our religion, and they return home happy and contented.

I will tell you another curious little anecdote. On the evening

of the day of the Immaculate Conception, as I was going to the Church to give Benediction, a lively little creature, about seven years old, was brought to me. She had no mother, and her father was so poor that he claimed the dirty old clothing which covered his child. I immediately called the superior, and gave the child into her care. After Benediction, on returning to the orphanage, the new comer was consigned by the directresses to another little one who was to teach her to make the sign of the cross, whilst they were engaged in preparing the evening meal. As the pupil got puzzled in making the sign of the cross, the little mistress began to laugh, upon which the child exclaimed: "Why do you laugh so instead of teaching me properly? Be attentive, or else, do you see, I shall tear out your eyes." "What do you mean?" This outbreak threw all the others into fits of laughter, and even the directresses could not help admiring the impatient desire for instruction which was shown by the uncontrolled quickness of the little girl. She has already learned the common prayers and a little of the first catechism.

On my knees to kiss your holy ring, I beg you to bless me, and have the honour to be, with the most profound respect, your Lordship's

Very humble and obedient servant,
Fr. Joachim Orsi, M. O.

From the Rt. Revd. Dr. Eustace Zanolì, Vic. Apost. of Hou-Pe, to the Director of the Society.

(Translated from the Italian.)

Ou-Tchang-Fou, 16th April, 1866.

Revd. Sir,

I am now about to fulfil my promise to inform you of the progress of the charitable Society of the Holy Childhood in our Mission of Hou-Pe, during the past year, 1865, or I should rather say, to tell you some of the circumstances relating to it.

But first, I must tell you that with all my missionaries, I fulfilled the duty required by gratitude in celebrating the holy Sacrifice of the Mass on the octave of the Epiphany, for the progress of the Society, and for all its deceased benefactors.

I remember telling you last year of a little blind boy who had been received into the orphanage. He was only eight years old, but, being very clever, he taught prayers and catechism to his companions. I decided to baptise him with twelve others of our

children, the eve of Pentecost, 1865, being the day chosen for the solemn ceremony. I had them prepared for this great act by a good priest, and their respective masters the day preceding. The impression made upon them by the ceremonies of the Church was very evident. Besides the little blind child there were four other boys, who had been torn from their families by the rebels, but who, after having escaped many dangers, were, by the wonderful interposition of divine Providence, inscribed amongst the children of God. Two of them were placed under the care of the Holy Childhood by two christian soldiers, who had rescued them from the hands of the rebels during the war.....They both belonged to the province of Chan-Si, and the younger is the son of a tailor soldier. These two young people are of rare goodness; they are constantly repeating the sad history of their misfortunes, and returning thanks to the Lord for having made use of them, to lead them into the bosom of the true religion. The elder was taken two years ago by the rebels in the neighbourhood of Han-Tchaung-Fau, and for several months he was obliged to follow them in their excursions, but as he was too young to be able to keep pace with the horses, they were afraid that he would remain behind, and be lost. He was, moreover, with other children of his own age, fastened to the tails of the horses, and dragged along the journey. of ten or twenty leagues, which were made every day by the rebels. The fatigue of such a march may be imagined. Many of these poor children must have sunk under it, and this would have been the fate of our poor orphan if the Lord had not speedily delivered him from the hands of these barbarians. And in fact, when he was brought to our orphanage by that good Christian soldier, besides periodical attacks of fever, he suffered from such nervous pains in the legs and feet, that he could get no rest either night or day. In spite of the active means employed to cure him they continued to trouble him for about seven weeks. Generally speaking, I have nothing but praise to bestow upon the boys of the orphanage. They are all obedient, well disposed, and of a good character, and many of them already show an inclination to employ themselves in the propagation of our holy religion. No doubt they are guilty of childish faults, but even these bear witness to the goodness of their dispositions.

We received last year, a little blind boy into our orphanage, and this year a little girl has been brought to us in the same condition. She had been left by her parents in a neighbouring street, when a good Christian brought her to our house. She is only three or four years old, but she already begins to stammer her prayers for her benefactors. Last winter, a number of new born babes were

brought to our orphanage, who had been left abandoned at the gate of our residence.

Our baptisers too, had plenty of work during the epidemic, which, in the hot season especially, made such havoc amongst children. An old baptiser of the town of Kan-Ching-Kien-Fou, visited more than two thousand sick children, and sent more than three hundred of them to heaven. The number of baptisms has therefore greatly increased, and though I have not been able to ascertain the exact number, it has certainly been more than 7000. In the new district of Hanang-Tcheou-Fou, the neophytes begin to employ themselves in the baptism of children in danger of death, although hardly a 20th part of them have received themselves holy baptism. In this manner I have already several times seen a numerous Christian settlement established, and in spite of the obstacles which are interposed by the evil one, they still continue to extend. At present there are two missionaries, and there will soon perhaps be a third. The disposition of the people could not be better.....

But to return to our baptisers.—I hope that this year will gather more fruit for heaven than the last. Besides the great number of doctors who devote themselves to the work of baptizing, there are other circumstances which encourages this hope. The rebels, who like to hold a sort of fair for two months in the vicinity of the part of Han-Kian, go there in small detachments without doing any harm to the mission, and they never stop in any place where Christians are found, which we attribute to the special protection of St. Joseph. Thus all the population of the north-east of this province takes refuge in this part, and a great number of children are forsaken; our baptisers hasten to them, and all obtain an abundant harvest for heaven. It is sad to see the number of poor people who are wandering about and asking alms; but thanks be to God, the rebels will go, and it is said that even now they are in the neighbourhood of Chang-Tong. The Holy Childhood will lose nothing, but on the contrary gain the baptism of a large number of children.

I should like to tell you about our schools, but I think I have written sufficiently at length this time, I will return to the subject in another letter.

In the meanwhile, I beg you kindly to continue your aid, assuring you that with all the missionaries, my colleagues, I shall not cease to pray for the benefactors of the Holy Childhood, and particularly for those who give us so many proofs of confidence and so much encouragement.

Accept, &c.

Father Eustache Zanoli, Vic. Apost. of Hou-Pe.

From the Rev. Father Salvan, Lazarist Missionary in China, to the
Director of the Society.

Island of Tchou-San (Tché-Kiang) 5th March, 1866.

Rev. Sir,

In accordance with the wishes of the Central Council, I am about to lay before you an account of the origin, the progress, and the present state of the establishments of the Holy Childhood in our Islands. I hope my report will be satisfactory; at any rate, it will be a proof of my good will and sincere gratitude.

Let us go back to the year 1854. At that time we had just passed through a reaction which had well nigh destroyed the rising Christian settlement of this island. A violent tempest which had been raised up by the enemy against the little flock of the Lord, appeared to have produced the intended effect. Our few neophytes, as yet but weak in faith, were flying from the anger of the people, or seeking to hide themselves from it; the name and profession of Christian were held in execration, and measures were taken to prevent the reappearance of Christians for ever in the island. What was to be done in order to dissipate prejudice, restore the dignity of the Christian name, and undermine the kingdom of the evil one? What better means could be employed than to establish the Holy Childhood, and thus to overthrow the strong by means of the weak, destroy prejudice and calumny by the innocent voice of the orphan and the new-born child, and in short by the weakest means establish the triumph and the glory of the divine Redeemer?

The new soldiers with which the missionary who desires to conquer these islands to the true faith must surround himself, are the forsaken children whom he collects and baptises. But a double obstacle opposed his projects, and appeared to destroy all his hopes. Not only had it been forbidden, with horrible threats, to sell us an inch of ground, but we had against us two or three rich men, who were the former administrators of the hospital for foundlings, which they have suffered to fall into ruin, in order that they may divide its revenues amongst themselves. These unfaithful stewards looked upon our work simply as a rival, claiming those possessions which they so unjustly retain, and consequently they used all their influence to plunge us again into the abyss from which we had hardly escaped.

In the midst of all these difficulties, the missionary patiently waited till providence should strike the hour. That blessed hour could not fail to sound. We had a guarantee for this in a small

point of land which the mission had succeeded in preserving in spite of the intrigues and threats which had been made use of to rob us. Six children were waiting with the missionary till the goodness of God should procure them an asylum. They had long to wait, but at last after eight months of suffering had passed away, heaven granted our desires.

A rich proprietor took the risk of selling us some acres of rice fields. I need not say with what consolation the heart of the missionary was filled as he signed this first contract. A kind providence had procured him a spot of land which was precisely that which, in his solitary walks, he had looked upon as best suited for our undertakings. These rice grounds are situated at twenty minutes distance from the town, not far from the high road, near a stream and at the foot of a hill. Now these local conditions, besides being necessary in themselves, are likely to make our farm an eloquent pulpit for truth.

As soon as this purchase from an influential person became known, the smaller proprietors no longer feared to sell to us. The missionary immediately purchased a thatched house in which he placed the six orphans.

Such, Rev. Sir, is the origin of the farm of St. Joseph, in the archipelago of Tchou-San. It is the very small grain of mustard-seed which, rendered fertile by the monthly halfpenny and the daily prayer of the associates, has germinated and become a fine tree, under which innumerable orphans are sheltered.

These first foundations were laid towards the end of 1854. The novelty of the enterprise attracted attention; at first some suspicion was excited regarding our intentions; they were soon dissipated at the sight of our little colonists, who were brought up in conformity with the usages and customs of the country. Passers by stopped to observe the little family working in the rice grounds; if they communicated to each other their reflections, our children were glad to take part in a conversation of which they were the subject, and by their merry repartees, highly amused the inquisitive pagans.

These fortunate beginnings smoothed down all difficulties. A new era had begun for the mission. There was no longer anything to oppose the development of its undertaking. There was nothing to be done but to follow the indications of Providence, to build and to purchase rice grounds, as the children grew and multiplied. Thus it was that our existing buildings, begun in 1855, were continued in 1857, and completed in 1862, as the wants of our little population required. They consist of two sets of buildings; the first and principal forms a right angle. One of these sides contains

ten rooms; the other twelve with a storey above. Each room measures eighteen feet six inches long, by twenty-one broad. The second set contains the kitchen, stables, and cart sheds.

As our establishment now enjoys the confidence of the islanders, most of them place at our door the children they wish to get rid of instead of putting them to death. It therefore became necessary to find an asylum for the little nurslings, and in the year 1857 the hospital which we have in the town was begun. It was enlarged in 1860 and 1862, and now contains ten rooms besides the offices, this being quite as much as our little people require. We can easily enlarge our premises if the family should increase. The Chinese mode of constructing makes these alterations easy, and nothing in our buildings looks at all European—all is completely Chinese. Such is the present condition of the working of the Holy Childhood. The straw built hut is changed into two beautiful houses, a farm for the boys, and a hospital for the little girls. The same transformation has taken place in our labours. The first six orphans served their apprenticeship as cultivators of six acres. We now cultivate more than 30 acres. During the summer, the children work in the rice grounds, or else go to the hills to cut fuel for the hearths of the two houses of the institution. Our piece of 30 acres is sufficient to occupy us at present, and if Providence should increase our family, we hope we shall be enabled by your assistance to enlarge our workshop—I say *workshop*, or *woodyard*, because these successive purchases of ground have been made in order to supply what was needful to our little colonists. We are far from thinking we are able to undertake any great work, still less to speculate in hope of deriving benefit from it. Undertakings of this nature, as they are more or less mercantile, are not suitable to missionaries, and not only would they deprive us of the blessing of heaven, but they would assimilate us to those fortune-hunters so despised by the Chinese, and would infallibly ruin our influence. If then the houses of the Holy Childhood have prospered in our island—if we have acquired the right of citizenship—if we European missionaries are called *pou-li-sen*, (men of the country, fellow-citizens,) it is that in everything, in our houses, in our manner of cultivating the ground, in the education we give to the children—all is in accordance with the usages and customs of the country we are inhabiting. If we enjoy the general sympathy, it is because we have endeavoured to make ourselves *all things to all men* in all matters which concern not the conscience. Besides, our views and our means are but humble; there is nothing about us to excite admiration; we do not at once attempt different methods of

cultivation, but content ourselves with an imitation of the little local clearings by which we are surrounded.

As we look forward to making our adopted children little farmers, who may as soon as possible maintain themselves, and thus relieve the purse of the Association, we have adopted the modes of culture employed by our neighbours. The implements used by the Chinese peasants are few in number and of primitive simplicity. A hoe, a plough, to which a borrowed ox is harnessed with two capes of straw, and if you add to these a *pian-tan*, or piece of bamboo a yard and a half long to the extremities of which are fixed the ponies for the cart, you have all that is required for the cultivation of these islands. We are satisfied with these implements; for a long time to come we must be careful how we venture to introduce the inventions of European industry.

Our productions are also greatly restricted, and on this point also we follow the Chinese routine with a firm intention of persevering in it. In China *everything that is new or foreign is at least very suspicious, if not bad*. This prejudice is a principle which prevails universally both in the masses and with individuals, and it must not only be respected but practically adopted, and for this reason you will find amongst us no foreign plant nor produce. Our principal harvests have been as follows. We stored in our granary last year 25,000 lbs of rice. The hills furnish our supplies of tea and of wood, (that is herbs and fagots for the annual provision of the two houses,) and we also gathered from 8 to 10,000 lbs of a root rather like the potato, but which though more tender has less taste. It is useless to speak of the herbs and vegetables which are the produce of our garden.

Such are our principal productions, but there is yet one of a different kind of which you expect me to give some short account. You no doubt, Mr. Director, wish to know something of our spiritual fruits. God above knows their full extent, and keeps an exact account for each associate, to be made manifest at the great day of reward. But I must not pass over in silence the good which is doing in my little corner.

Inheriting apostolic power and virtue, the monthly halfpenny possesses its prodigious fecundity. May we not indeed speak of it as restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and life to the dead? I daily witness these prodigies. Since the Society was first established in our island, upwards of 2000 little Pagans have obtained the enjoyment of life eternal through the means of our baptisers and the monthly halfpenny of our associates. We have adopted 554 children, of whom nearly 300 already swell the numbers of the blessed, whilst 144 are still living, and are

thus disposed of; forty-eight are farmers or apprentices, thirty-one little girls are in the hospital, and sixty-five are out at nurse. Now, that all these enjoy the light of faith, and that they understand and speak the praises of God, is due alone to the virtue of the monthly halfpenny. Yes. All who survive acknowledge their little European brothers as their saviours and redeemers. I will instance the last children who have come to us in proof of this; they are girls, for amongst the sixty-five children we have at nurse, there is not a single boy.

One child was snatched from the hands of her own mother who was about to plunge her into the river; another was removed from the coffin, in which she was deposited with her dead mother, because there was no one who would take charge of her. An occurrence by no means unfrequent. Another was found upon the road by a good Samaritan of our acquaintance. Alas! she will not long survive, for her father threw her down on the pavement, and a deep wound on the head indicates the violence of the fall. A fourth was condemned to die even before her birth; her relations were watching for her coming, and if a girl, they had determined to suffocate her immediately. A similar tale may be told of all our survivors.

A good man stopped me one day, in the road, saying: "Father, there will soon be a new born babe in our village, but should it be a daughter, they will not keep it. I will bring it to you if you like." What answer could I make to such a question? Life and death were thus placed in my power. No; I could never under such circumstances utter a refusal which would be in fact the sentence of eternal death. Deputed by the Holy Childhood to give fertility to its alms, I shall not fail in my obedience to this mandate. I will place out the halfpenny at the highest interest, and it will gain eternal revenues. I will save the life of the soul and even that of the body of these little infidels, in order to increase the merit of all our little associates. Yes; the monthly halfpenny is an unfailing guarantee of the eternal salvation of the givers. The Angel Raphael once said: "Alms deliver from death." They purify from sin, and bring us to mercy and eternal life.

Recommend me, Rev. Sir, to the prayers of all the dear associates, and tell them that I think of them every day during the holy Mass; and besides this, I celebrated the holy Sacrifice many times last year for the intentions of the two Societies, those of the Propagation of the Faith, and of the Holy Childhood.

Pray accept,

H. Sálvan, Miss. Apost. P. G. M.

BELGIAN MISSIONARIES IN MONGOLIA.

Extracts from a letter from the Rev. Francis Vranckx, Miss. Apost. in Mongolia, to his colleagues at Brussels.

In the last number of the *Annals*, we gave our first notices of the Belgian Mission in Mongolia; here follow some further extracts from a letter from that country written by one of the worthy companions of the Rev. Fr. Verbist. They contain some curious notices about this province of China and some edifying details. Our dear associates will read these interesting pages with great pleasure, and will unite with us in making fervent vows for the success of this important mission, which is now placed under the care of the worthy children of Catholic Belgium, long known for its admirable zeal for the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Si-Wan-Tze, 15 March, 1866.

.....As to the roads! I have already told you that it is impossible for you to form any idea of them. In the part of Mongolia which we inhabit, there are none at all. Whether you go to the north or to the south, to the east or to the west, you meet in all directions with chains of mountains intersected by deep abysses and narrow defiles. Sometimes they appear to be symmetrically arranged side by side. Here they seem to be overturned and heaped together pell-mell, and further on they lift their pointed summits and steep sides against the sky. The picture is ever changing, but however beautiful, however varied it may be, the constant sight of these rocks and mountains fails not to fill the soul with a deep feeling of sadness and melancholy, and if I may say so, a kind of feverish impatience to escape from them. I am sometimes attacked, I must own, with an imperative desire to run furiously across these gorges and defiles, or even to scale one mountain after another in the hope of obtaining at last a horizon of a little more extent.

What weakness! you will say. I own it; but the heart cannot be conquered in a day; nature will sometimes suddenly awaken; by a strange illusion, our dear native country presents itself in living reality before the eyes, or the remembrance of all that is dear to us takes possession of our being, and then arise terrible struggles in the soul. But there can be no victory without a battle; to fight is the condition of all, and the struggle must be carried on always and everywhere.

You will hardly believe what a source of hope and consolation we find in the example of the poor Christians amongst whom we reside.

About half a century ago, Pe-King possessed many fervent disciples of Jesus Christ to whom everything appeared to promise happy and peaceful times, when one fine morning they were awakened from their security, as it were by a thunder clap. The emperor Kia-King had just issued an edict of death to all who followed the religion of the Master of Heaven! What was to be done? How escape the vigilant eye of the mandarins? Where should they hide? Whither flee?

For days following, you might meet upon the terrible roads I have described in my former letter, groups of men and women, children and old people, exhausted by hunger and overwhelmed with fatigue. Whither should they go? Where stop? Wherever the hand of God should lead them. They had heard of Mongolia. They had crossed the great wall, placing it as a barrier between themselves and their persecutors, when on emerging from a defile they entered upon a large valley watered by a limpid stream. The valley was uninhabited, and they resolved to wait there till better times should come. They at once dug caverns in the sides of the mountains, the herbs of the field were their food, and the water of the spring served to refresh their thirst.

But now the valley is no longer a desert; it is annually covered with rich harvests. Sy-Wan-Tse, fifty years ago an unknown name, has become a centre from which Christianity radiates over the whole of the north of China. The young Levites of Mongolia come to her bosom to imbue themselves with the source of sacred science. By the side of the seminary, a magnificent cathedral has arisen. The times have passed away when the sacred sign of our redemption was compelled to fly the light. It now rises up majestically, and thousands of Christians come in full liberty to offer their homage to the crucified God, under the shelter of its life giving shadow.

Oh! that the Christians of Europe could witness the fervour of our poor Chinese. I shall never forget the sight we enjoyed on Christmas night. Though the thermometer stood at 25°, there were a number of caravans encamped in the open air, belonging to the Christians of the neighbouring villages, who had been unable to find any shelter amongst their friends or acquaintance. For on our great feast days people come from distances of twenty, thirty, or even forty miles, all around, to assist at the offices, and all the houses of the neighbourhood are changed into hotels. Long before midnight the Church was full; at the moment when the Priest began to entone the song of the Angels announcing to

the shepherds the birth of the Saviour, thousands of crackers exploded, at the same time the cannon fired, the bells sounded and the whole assembly, as if carried away by a holy delirium, rose, and repeated with pious enthusiasm; "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will."

Yes! noble Christians of Mongolia, may the peace of the Lord remain always with you. You have known the fatigues of the strife; it is just that you should gather the sweet fruits of victory, and may it be granted to your prayers that those who have come from so great a distance to aid you in sustaining the battle of life may never feel their own courage falter.

You see, I have not forgotten my promise that I would not conceal the trials which attend upon missionary life; there are some privileged souls who never experience these struggles, and you are perhaps of the number.

For my own part, I am impatiently awaiting the summer, which will drive far away the sadness and monotony of our mountains. Everything will soon assume a fresh and smiling aspect. After the first rains, our valleys, which have been dried up and scorched by the bitter blast of the Siberian wind, will be covered with rich harvests; our bare and naked mountains and rocks will again be clothed in a brilliant robe of moss and verdure, and will be animated by the lively bleating of numberless flocks of sheep and goats.

Do not fancy that I am becoming poetical; all those who have seen Mongolia during the fine season agree in saying that it is an enchanting place. Many a time have we laughed amongst ourselves at that good Mr. G..... who, during one of our visits to Paris, drew a picture of Mongolia which was enough to make one's hair stand on end. If we have not really found the overwhelming crosses and the tribulations without number with which we appeared to be menaced, at least God will give us credit for our good intentions, for He knows that we were ready for every sacrifice.

You may remember that we expected to find a winter of unparalleled severity; we had been told that the customary temperature was 40 degrees. Now I can assure you with truth, that I have never suffered less from cold than this winter. I am far from affirming that the cold is less severe than in Belgium. During the months of December, January and February, the thermometer almost always ranges between 18 and 25 degrees, and I doubt whether in Belgium it ever fell so low, and yet, for all this, I maintain my assertion; the climate of Mongolia is easier to bear than that of our own country.

In the first place, you get accustomed to the cold here. In Belgium you have snow to-day and rain to-morrow; in the morning

the wind is from the north, in the evening it blows from the south. These sudden changes of temperature are unknown in these countries; the wind sets in from the north in September, and remains in that quarter till April. Through the whole of the winter there is neither rain nor fog, very little snow and no frost. The sky is almost always perfectly serene, and I think it is impossible to have more delightful or healthier walks than those which can daily be taken here under the beneficent rays of the mid-day sun.

And then how comfortably we are lodged and clothed; I will not now speak of our warm caverns; Mr. Van Segvelt has fully described them, but you must allow me to enumerate the different articles which form our travelling costume. For pantaloons we wear about the legs enormous sacks lined with wadding; our under garment is a vest of the same, over this a long robe entirely trimmed with lamb-skin; to protect the throat a pelisse of other skin, and for the chest and back a kind of leather cuirass; over all this a furred mantle which reaches the middle of the leg. For the feet we have enormous wadded stockings, which are plunged into gigantic velvet boots lined with felt, and for head-dress a large cap of fox-skin, with bands for the forehead, the ears and the neck.

After what I have said of the climate of Mongolia, you will look upon our accoutrements as superfluous luxuries, but you must not judge hastily; remember that I speak of a travelling costume, and travelling in this country is often to mount on horseback or remain in a cart for fifteen or twenty days, and woe to him who has taken no precautions against the rigour of the season. He will sometimes have to pass through gorges in which the wind rages with a fury of which you can form no idea; sometimes he will have to climb high mountains, on the summit of which the north wind displays all his power; he will be surprised perhaps by a snow-storm which will freeze him to the marrow of his bones. A number of unfortunate people perish every year, the victims of their own imprudence.

You cannot therefore take too many precautions; they are the more necessary as it is by no means desirable to fall into the hands of a Chinese Esculapius. May God preserve us from falling ill in this country. We have a Chinese pharmacy at the seminary. I cannot imagine who could ever think of employing as remedies the horrible drugs which are to be found here; toad's feet, wolf's eyes, vulture's claws, human skin and fat and other medicaments still more horrible, of which I spare you the enumeration. No sorcerer's cave ever contained such a collection of horrors.

You must not however suppose that the Chinese doctors are not clever; I simply assert that they have remedies of which we can form no idea. A Lazarist missionary lately fell ill with fever.

You would suppose that they would give him a dose of quinine—not at all. The doctor arrives, he examines the patient and immediately administers a volley of blows, first upon the fore arm and then upon the leg, and so well applied that at the end of ten minutes the blood flowed in abundance. This was all; the fever had disappeared.

I remember our occasionally speaking of acupuncture when we were in Belgium. Some believed in it; others laughed at it. Let me give you an instance which gives some appearance of truth to the former statement. About two years ago the Rev. Dr. Smorenburg, of the Pe-King mission, was sent for to a little village to administer the Sacraments to several Christians attacked by cholera. He had hardly finished his laborious task when he felt the first symptoms of the malady. Deceiving himself as to his condition, he threw himself on his horse in hopes of getting to Pe-King in time to be properly treated. At two leagues from the town he could go no farther; he had himself placed in a pagoda and desired his catechist to make all speed to Pe-King and get some help. In the meantime, internal cramps came on with such violence that he fainted away.

Some pagans however, touched with compassion, ran to fetch the village doctor. He came and set to work. Arming himself with a very long strong needle, he thrust it completely into the stomach of the patient. No blood flowed. "He is dead," cried the Esculapius. "No, no," replied M. Smorenburg, in a feeble voice, recalled to life by the sensation of pain, "I felt well enough that some one pricked me; go on." Fresh attempts were made, and after some moments a drop of blood appeared. At this sight, the doctor being almost certain of saving the patient, began to puncture in a kind of rage. When the catechist returned with a litter from Pe-King, he found the poor M. Smorenburg pierced with more than 150 pricks, but every symptom of cholera had vanished!

But enough of medicine. Let us by way of contrast say a few words about our cookery. Here again you will be amazed. When we left home we believed ourselves condemned for life to a diet of oatmeal and millet, with pure water for our only drink. Oatmeal and millet indeed! why we are in a country where quails and partridges and pheasants abound, and where goats and antelopes are bounding about above our heads by hundreds; and for whom did divine providence intend all this substantial food if not for us poor missionaries? Certainly they were not made for the Chinese, for the Chinese stomach abhors dark meats, and prefers the ass or the dog. You think I am joking? I myself for a long time looked upon the accounts of the depraved taste of the Chinese as fabulous, but after I had seen our servants regaling themselves on one of our

yard-dogs who had died of disease and old age, I was obliged to believe the evidence of my senses.

But we, who have more delicate stomachs, we allow ourselves to live upon game. Do not however suppose that we are indulging in any great luxury. Partridges are three halfpence each, and you pay two-and-sixpence or three shillings for a magnificent goat. We should have royal feasts had we only some of our European vegetables. But patience; these will come in time. We have contrived to grow the potato, and I do not know what there is to prevent our seeing before long, spinach, asparagus, peas, and perhaps even our good little Brussels sprouts growing in our garden.

You will think me, for a missionary, a wonderful epicure, but I see no reason why we should feed on oatmeal and millet when other things, neither less good nor more expensive, are easily to be procured. But stop; if you press me upon this subject I must own that last month we began to brew beer. Tea in the morning, tea at noon, tea in the evening, nothing but tea; are we condemned to have our blood changed into tea? or must we have recourse to the horrible Chinese brandy? The fact is, that in this severe climate there is a pressing want of some drink more or less alcoholic. You know that the vine is unknown in this country, but we obtain magnificent grapes from the south, from which we make the wine needed for the Holy Sacrifice, and if I must make a little confession, I accuse myself of using it on grand occasions.....

"What then!" cries some long-faced puritan, "this is the life of a missionary! It would have been just as well to remain in Europe. Here we are pitying you, buried as we suppose in a kind of Siberia, whilst you are all the while leading the life of a sybosite in a terrestrial paradise."

"Pardon me, Sir, a moment, if you please. Here is my catechist."

Catechist.—Father, will you get ready to start in order to administer the Sacraments?

Myself.—Is it far from home?

Catechist.—I think we shall get there in less than a week.

Myself.—Oh! and in such weather! Do you think the case urgent?

Catechist.—When the messenger left the sick person, he was very weak and desired confession very earnestly. It is two years since there has been a mission in his village.

Myself.—We will set out at once.

Catechist.—Shall I have the car harnessed?

Myself.—My dear friend! you know that the very name of your

cars makes me shudder. Do you wish me to get there with all my limbs out of joint? Please to have the horses saddled.

And now you may see me on my fortnight's journey, trotting for five hours each morning and five each afternoon, lodging God knows in what places, dining sometimes on nothing, and supping upon food of which I think as little as possible, lest the first taste should destroy all appetite. Do you think it wrong that, on my return, I should regale upon a piece of kid and some wine?

But, you reply, these are exceptional cases. Yes! but they occur pretty frequently when we have twenty-five Christian settlements in our district, several miles distant from each other.

You just now heard my catechist tell me that this poor invalid had not been to confession since the last mission. Do you know what is meant by a mission in these countries? I will tell you. I have said that in our district of Sy-Wan-Tse there are Christians scattered over twenty-five different villages. In how many of these villages do you suppose that there are priests? Only at Sy-Wan-Tse; and yet the bread of life must be broken to these poor scattered sheep: how can we manage to do this?

Every year, when the labours of the field are at an end, two missionaries, accompanied by their catechists, leave the seminary and begin their round. They arrive at a village where there are Christians, and receive a reception which, if not magnificent, is at least cordial. The least poor of the families give up for a few days the cavern they have been themselves inhabiting, and in the evening, the missionaries spread their mattress on a *kiang* where, thanks to the presence of certain little guests, forgotten by their predecessors, they are by no means sure of finding sleep. Never mind, delicacy is out of place in a mission.

So the missionary is at work the day after his arrival. These poor Christians have heard nothing of religion for a year—perhaps two, and in consequence need instruction. They are assembled night and morning, and reminded of the great truths of religion. There are children to prepare for first Communion, the ceremonies of baptism to complete, marriages to bless, catechumens to examine, reconciliations to effect, differences to adjust, and the confessions of all these Christians to hear. What a laborious and yet most interesting occupation for eight or ten days! and then, when all is ended, and the missionary has given his last blessing to the little flock which he has reconciled with God, he mounts his horse and goes fifteen or twenty miles further, to recommence the same labours. And for how long a time do you think? Who knows? for six, seven, or perhaps eight months.

Poor Chinese Christians! may we not say with our Lord, "The harvest is great but the labourers few".....

Oh! that the time were come when we might send into the field of the householder the pious pupils of our seminary, several of whom are on the point of receiving the priesthood, and more especially the moment when our dear country will send us a new contingent of zealous labourers, so that we shall be able to face the difficulties of the task which has been confided to us by the Holy See.

Yes! noble and generous Belgium, we reckon on you. Not only will you send us soldiers, but you will arm them with the weapons which they require to fight the battles of the Lord. It is hardly necessary to make any appeal to the generosity of your hearts after all that we have shown you as to the state of our mission.....

TONG KING.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Jeantet, Vic. Apost. of Western Tong-King, to the members of the Central Council of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Ke-Nan, (Western Tong King) 15th April, 1866.

Gentlemen,

Father Joseph Ly, whose precious remains we send to the Chapel belonging to the House of the Holy Childhood at Paris, was indeed the cherished child of Divine Providence, which had called him from the bosom of paganism to become a Levite, a priest, a martyr..... We regret that we know little of his life; like that of most martyrs it remains in obscurity. This poor Priest attracted little attention till the God of the strong surrounded his head with the nimbus of the martyr. What follows is all that we have been able to learn concerning this hero of the Holy Childhood, and we gladly communicate it to you.

He was born in the province of Ninh-Binh, about the year 1824 or 1825; his father was by profession a magician, and his mother was also a pagan, although in his native village about a third of the population was Christian. According to the custom of this country he was sent when very young to study the Chinese letters in a school in which pagan and Christian children were received indifferently. This was the means made use of by Providence for bringing the young Ly to the knowledge of the Gospel. From the first he sought the society of his Christian comrades and loved to take part in their games and amusements.

Some time after the Rector of Phat-Zien having come to administer the Sacraments in his country, the young Ly was most urgent in asking to see the native Priest. The Priest asked him several questions, and speedily discovering the uprightness and good disposition of the young man, he was induced to ask him if he would become a Christian and remain with him. No proposal could have been more agreeable to young Ly, who hastened to accept it. His father at first made some opposition, but the child surmounted all difficulties to follow Father P. Thanh, who completed his instruction and gave him, in his Baptism, the name of Joseph.

But the evil one did not so easily relinquish his prey, he saw in the young convert the hero who would vanquish him in all places, even in the bloody arena of the martyrs. Joseph Ly had been but for seven months with his spiritual father, when the mandarins blockaded the settlement of Phat-Zien; and in the blockade, Messieurs Galy, and Berneux, and Fr. P. Thanh were taken. Thus the young Ly remained an orphan, exposed to the snares of the devil. The magician who had seen the departure of his son with much sorrow, though he had come to a better mind about it, yet seized this opportunity for bringing him back to his family, but the future martyr knew already that he who loves his father and mother more than God is not worthy of heaven. Although still young in the faith, he hesitated not to sacrifice everything, and fled from his country to go to Ki-Ninh, two days distant, there to ask help and protection from the Father of all the Christians, the illustrious Bishop Retord. The worthy prelate was not long in discovering the good disposition and piety of this youth, and finding him besides, acquainted with Chinese letters and a very apt scholar, he immediately placed him in the Mission College. Here Bishop Retord superintended the progress of the young convert of knowledge and piety. When his Latin studies were completed, he was raised by the prelate to the dignity of catechist, to instruct children and Christians and preach the faith to those pagans to whom Priests could but rarely speak in those unhappy times.

But though he had fled the paternal roof, the young Ly had by no means forgotten his relations; on the contrary, he had constantly in recollection that they were still sitting in the shadow of death, under the yoke of the enemy he was determined to fight to his latest breath. He allowed himself therefore, no rest till he had opened the eyes of these two so dear to him. In spite of his opposition to the conversion of his son, the magician had very soon experienced its happy influence, for from the time when Joseph

Ly first entered the house of God, his father had burned all his books of magic and renounced his old calling. And God rewarded this first step in the right direction. Joseph Ly had the satisfaction of seeing his father and mother converted, and both died good Christians some years after. Two, out of his three brothers were also converted, and to them we are indebted for the information we are now able to give. The third brother has not yet opened his eyes to the light of the Gospel, but let us hope that the martyr will obtain this conversion also.

Joseph Ly had attained his thirtieth year, when Bishop Retord, who saw his virtue, devotion and zeal, determined no longer to delay admitting him to the Priesthood, in spite of the edicts of death which were then promulgated against Priests. This was on the 1st August, 1852, two years after the martyrdom of the Venerable Scheffler, and the same year as that of the Vin. Bonnard. The young Priest did not disappoint the hopes he had raised. He continued to preach with perseverance and fruit, and in spite of the persecution he traversed successively four large parishes, reanimating the faith and courage of the poor Christians. Phat-Ziem, Ke-Bang, Bong-Chuoi and Xuan-Hai were each in turn the theatre of his zeal and devotion. He had been too successful against the devil not to have excited his particular hatred. Pursued and tracked, Joseph Ly was at last seized in a cavern in which he had buried himself, thinking that there was less safety amongst the living than the dead.

Though the innocent victim made no resistance, the persecutors gave him a severe blow on drawing him from his hiding place. This took place on the 31st March, in the village of Yu Hem. He was immediately taken to the capital of the province of Ninh-Binh, and the interrogations began on the following day. "By whom have you been brought up and instructed?" asked the commandant. "I was at Ke-Ninh, where I studied under the master of religion Thinh," a Father superior of the college, (he had been martyred a short time previously.) At this reply, the mandarin ordered Joseph Ly to receive sixty strokes, which were applied with such force, that he could not rise, but although the severe cold added much to his sufferings, not a sigh escaped him. The interrogation ended, the soldiers carried away the courageous priest. One of them, unable to bear the sight of so much courage and such suffering, bought a little wood and lighted a fire to warm the limbs of the martyr, which were stiff with cold. At the second interrogation, there was the same question, the same reply, and fifty severe strokes. But this was not enough. The generous confessor was to suffer in mind as well as in body. There were in the prisons the

principal Christians of the village. The mandarins obliged them to strike the martyr five blows with rods, and these cowardly men, who themselves had denied their God, were not afraid to dip their hands in the martyr's blood.

The interrogations ended, sentence of death was pronounced and sent to the capital to be ratified. After eight months of captivity, the day of the martyr's triumph at last arrived. As it was winter, he feared lest the cold might be severe on the day of his execution, and that under its influence he should not seem as gay and joyful as became a martyr of Jesus Christ. But the King of martyrs heard his prayer, for on the day fixed for the execution, a beautiful sun, shining in all his splendour, drove away the wintry mists. As the hero was led to death, he saluted all the mandarins and returned them thanks for his death, he also saluted all whom he met, and went to his death as to a joyous feast. Having come to the place of execution, he knelt down and received the stroke of the sword, not having flinched for a single instant from the time of his arrest to this moment of his triumph, the 7th December, 1860.

The body of the martyr remained on the ground. During the night, five devoted Christians carried away the precious remains and buried them near the church of Xuan-Hai. There they have remained till the day when I had them removed to send to you.

May this brave martyr protect the admirable Society of the Holy Childhood from heaven above, may he obtain its increase, and thus promote the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Accept, Gentlemen, &c.

Charles Hubert Jeantet,

Bishop of Pentacomia, Vic. Apost. of Western Tong-King.

COCHIN-CHINA.

Remarks by the Rev. Fr. Le Mée, Miss. Apost. at Saigon, upon the savage tribe of the Stiengs. (Continued from the last No.)

The most frequent sickness in this country is intermittent fever; it does not often assume a malignant form with the natives, but strangers are very liable to its attacks. It is not surprising that this malady should prevail in a country which is not drained, is covered with swamps, and is constantly exhaling an atmosphere of deleterious miasma. I am persuaded, however, that the want of medical skill and of every comfort is a great aid to the nature of

the soil and climate in the propagation of these interminable fevers.

Would you believe that of all the persons who dwell in these wild regions or their neighbourhood, we missionaries, though from a country and condition so different, are those who least suffer from these fevers? Unlikely as this appears, it is the fact. But observe that although we enjoy this favour, it is gained by a sad experience which cost the lives of several missionaries of glorious memory, who were evangelizing the tribes of the north, in the midst of great suffering. But though we are fortunate to be able to learn from the experience of others, we are quite aware that it is to divine providence above all, that we owe our gratitude. It is our dear Lord's infinite bounty which permits us to retain our strength and health amidst these forests which are so justly dreaded on account of their insalubrity; whilst not far off, in places much more highly favoured by nature, and in the midst of plentiful resources, so many of our dear fellow-countrymen sink under the attacks of a fever a thousand times more fatal to them than the armies of Tu-Duc.

The small-pox is known only by name to the Stiengs, whilst it makes great ravages amongst their neighbours of Cambogia and Annam. We have instead another malady, not contagious, and much less dangerous, but of much longer duration. It generally attacks the young; but no one escapes should he live long, for those who are spared in youth are attacked in riper years. In general it attacks the same individual but once. It shows itself in large disagreeable looking pustules, which break out on all parts of the body, not excepting the face. It resembles the *psoriasis* of our pathology. Children become thin and miserable when suffering from it, which is usually during a whole year, and frequently, even after the disease has disappeared, it breaks out afresh, though with less intensity, so that it is not uncommon for children to pass two or three years before they completely recover. Those who are attacked later in life suffer more and for a longer time. The scars generally wear away with time, but yet it is by no means uncommon to see indelible and hideous traces of the disease, which sometimes affect the movement of the joints which have been its seat. They leave scars exactly like those caused by burns. I have been unable to find anything in my little pharmacy which is of any avail against this long and troublesome disease.

Another lesser malady which is peculiar to the country, is wounds which form in the sole of the foot. There are few of these savages who do not sometimes suffer from them, and they have great difficulty in finding a radical cure. I have found cauterising with nitrate of silver perfectly successful. Unfortunately, this is a pain-

ful remedy, and is besides one which it is difficult to practise in these countries. Nitrate of silver is nowhere to be obtained at a cheap rate, and the remedy will therefore always be scarce in comparison with the prevalence of the evil. I need not mention a thousand other infirmities which belong to human nature and are in no way remarkable, but I will observe that lameness and deformity are seldom met with, blindness and insanity are not unknown, and epilepsy is very common. I have not met with a single person deaf and dumb.

As to the practice of medicine, the savages know little about it; they sometimes drink the decoction of the bark of certain trees, and apply gums and resins in the form of plaisters, but more often use chalk, tobacco, lutel and other drugs of this kind, which I am persuaded very often increase the malady they are intended to relieve. A very common remedy is to blow smoke or hot air on the suffering part by means of a bamboo tube, and sometimes the heat is so intense that it burns and purifies the flesh as I have myself witnessed to a very great extent. There is a similar application which is applied both with and without reason to new-born babes as well as to grown up persons, and this is to produce scars upon the stomach by burning pinches of amadon upon it, which are inflamed by blowing upon them. If these fiery remedies do not afford great profit to the apothecary they cause much suffering to the patient. This is nearly all that there is to say about real medicine; as to the imaginary, that is, the employment of superstitious and diabolical practices, it always accompanies the other, and even takes precedence, for it is often employed alone.

The Stiengs are not absolutely wanderers; they form little villages in places where there are running waters, and where the forest seems favourable for making rice-fields. It generally happens that a number of these villages are grouped in a circle of no great extent. I have observed nine or ten in the space of about a square league. On the other hand you may sometimes traverse a great extent of forest without meeting with a single habitation. It is quite the solitude of a desert. The villages are never populous; it is not usual to find as many even as 300 or 400 persons, and often they consist only of thirty or forty. These savages often change the spot on which they live without leaving the canton they inhabit. If they move in one journey the distance of half or a quarter of an hour from their former huts, it is considered a great way. There are several reasons for their leading this half wandering life; superstition is the most frequent cause, but war is one also. They sometimes wish to find greater security from their enemies. The soil on which they live becomes sometimes exhausted,

and they remove in search of some which is better. Sometimes the great number of inhabitants in one village would soon oblige them to remove their rice-grounds too far off, as the numerous population would speedily exhaust the immediate vicinity. They then divide into two or even three groups, each of which fixes its huts in its own corner, and thus new villages are formed. Sometimes a misunderstanding amongst themselves is the cause; they cannot agree and therefore separate, as did formerly the servants of the two patriarchs Abraham and Lot. It sometimes happens, on the contrary, that a village decimated by war or the prevalence of some epidemic, joins its remains with those of some other which may be willing to receive it.

Do not suppose that these people choose some beautiful site, some exposed situation in which to erect their huts; on the contrary they make choice of the most retired and obscure places, and those in which they will be as little as possible exposed to the observation of ill-disposed travellers. Besides this, they surround their little village with one or two fences of palisades, leaving only narrow doors which they take care shall be open only during the day, and often—though this applies only to the savages of the north—they open them only when circumstances of necessity oblige, such as the entrance of some large animal, as a buffalo or an ox. At other times the palisade must be climbed by means of pieces of wood, on which are fixed shells in the manner of steps; and these are their staircases. In some cases, however, luxury is carried so far that ladders are formed of bamboo, by the help of which the gate may be passed over. The stairs for entering the huts are of the same kind; all this seems very convenient here, though with the exception of these good savages and perhaps our own Zouaves, I doubt whether any other person would be found of this opinion.

The huts are seldom arranged with any attention to order; they are made chiefly of bamboo; the supports are formed of another wood which is more solid; large leaves or plants, according to the locality, being used for the roof. As the inhabited part is always raised above the soil, the appearance of these huts is by no means disagreeable, and as the walls and the ceiling admit the light, the air has free circulation, and coolness is preserved during the great heats. Two inconveniences however arise from this arrangement, one is that the smoke from the hearth blackens and dirties everything, and the other, that all refuse from the kitchen and elsewhere being received by the ground floor, an odour, by no means agreeable, and doubtless little favourable to the health of the inhabitants of the hut, is often found to exhale.

The Stieng is of middle size, well made, strong and robust, and

his proud bearing proclaims him a child of the mountain and the forest. His tint is olive, nose flat, lips ordinary, eyes lively and face expressive. He lets his black or chestnut hair grow without cutting, except in the south, where it is often very short. It is remarkable that it is not uncommon to meet with savages who have crisped hair; I have remarked this also, though more rarely amongst the Cambogians, but it is never found amongst the Annamites.

In short, the appearance of the Stieng is prepossessing and rather distinguished. Although in a few rare cases he suffers himself to be carried away to inhuman actions, it may be said that naturally he is affable, gentle, merry, fond of fun, curious as a child about objects new to him, but very suspicious with regard to everything unknown. He thinks that strangers can only enter his country with the intention of taking him far away from his dear forests, and though he ought not to have these suspicions with regard to us Missionaries, who have been in familiar intercourse with him for the last six years, yet in spite of all we have said to reassure him on this point, he is not yet quite easy about it. How can he imagine that men rich, noble, clever, very superior to any whom he has hitherto seen, should take up their abode near his own with the single intention of instructing him and teaching him the true religion? This quite surpasses his small comprehension. I cannot say that the Stieng is never either a liar or a thief, but I can assert that these two vices, though prominently marked, exist in a much less degree than in other people. Together with these faults, the Stieng possesses a highly estimable quality; that of cordial hospitality towards every one. Should you come to him whilst travelling, he immediately offers you a place by his fire, spreads out a mat or the skin of an ox or deer, then offers you lutel, areca, or hemp which are its substitute, and tobacco, to chew or smoke. The women, on the other hand, are engaged in cooking rice and whatever is to accompany it, in preparation of a meal which shall restore your exhausted strength.

If the stranger is of any importance in their eyes, they offer him a jar of alcoholic liquor; sometimes they even immolate a pig, an ox or a buffalo to give greater solemnity to the feast. Whilst the newly arrived guest is engaged in the midst of the numerous party of the curious who have hastened to see him, his ears are regaled with the sounds of the tom-tom and the great drum, which are struck in cadence. You cannot imagine how delicate is the ear of the Stieng for producing this by no means disagreeable music. Though very monotonous, the savage is never fatigued by it. On your departure, they wish you a prosperous journey, they

give you provisions for the way, and in particular they fail not to invite you to return. Is not this true politeness? could anything better be done in Europe?

When, on my own account, I wish to recompense them for their kind and generous reception, I take good care not to tell them that I wish to indemnify them for what they have just given, for this would offend. I say, "will you accept this as a token of friendship and remembrance?" and they then do so with readiness and satisfaction, for they are eager after the articles which are current as money in their country, and if they are generous in giving what is their own, they are no less importunate in asking for whatever they see in your hands, and even for what you conceal from them. It is unpolite according to them, to refuse without giving any reason, whilst it is allowable to ask for everything freely and without ceremony, even to importunity. Now that I know the native language I can refuse without giving offence, and I succeed marvellously well either by telling some amusing story which so occupies their attention that they lose sight of the article they have asked for, or by giving them some reason for refusing which equally excites their risibility.

The ordinary dress of the Stieng does not embarrass him or hinder him from running easily through the forest. A scarf a few inches long round the waist is all required by the men; that of the women is larger and descends below the knees. But the savage has his holiday costume, and then wears a fine blue scarf striped with red and yellow, which goes several times round the waist, and the ends of which, ornamented with fringe of different colours, hang down on one side as low as the ankle. The upper part of the body is covered with a little short coat of blue cloth or flowered indian stuff, or red serge, or anything else he has been able to procure; glass beads of different colours, strung together with some skill, form numerous necklaces, which hang gracefully upon his chest; his long hair is turned up behind his head, and fastened by a comb of bamboo covered with tin plates, and a thick brass wire divided in two and crowned with a plume of pheasant's feathers, and some pieces of red stuff. Little brass wires twined spirally round the fingers take the place of rings, and a much larger wire of the same metal serves as a bracelet, reaching from the wrist to the elbow. This wire is sometimes divided by buckles, sometimes forms one undivided spiral; enormous holes in the lobes of the ears serve to receive large blocks of ivory or bone in the shape of pendants. The Stieng wears a sword at his left side or else he shoulders a small gun or holds a lance in his hand. In any case he is never without some defensive weapon.

He can accustom himself to a coat, but he never replaces his scarf by pantaloons.

The woman in her holiday costume, wears a large striped scarf, a short coat, and a very scanty dress. Her hair, gathered up at the back of the head, is usually very little ornamented. Like the man she has brilliant collars round her neck, large earrings, rings on her fingers, and heavy bracelets on her arms. She has besides, what is never seen with the men, other bracelets, if they can be so called, which surround her ankles from the instep to the middle of the leg. You will say that all this, particularly the quantity of brass wire, must be very heavy and inconvenient, and this is true, but did these wild women see our European ladies with stays which stifle them, or a crinoline, the immense size of which embarrasses not only themselves, but their neighbours, might they not justly say: "Every one has his tastes, but it is plain that ours are by no means the most depraved?" I have just described the grandest costumes, but they vary with each person's circumstances and means, and there are many intermediate kinds of dress.

The principal food of the savages is rice boiled in water, which in all these countries takes the place of bread. The women know how to clear off the husk, and still better how to dress it in earthen pots. I have never found rice so well prepared as by these savages. The forests abound in fruit trees, but the produce is little agreeable to any taste but that of the natives, who eat with pleasure things which to Europeans would be simply detestable; such as leaves, barks, flowers, the roots of plants just springing up, all of them with more or less of acid or bitter flavour. Add to this that the savage not having a repugnance for anything when he wishes to satisfy his stomach, can put into his ragouts snakes, lizards, rats, bats, worms, caterpillars, ants, grasshoppers, crickets, and a thousand other creatures of this kind; in fact almost all living things are fit for his food. He fills a bamboo tube with these different products of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, which he crams in with a stick, suspends the tube over the fire, turns it from time to time, stirs it up when boiling, and when it is completely dressed, he feeds with delight upon a dish which would turn the stomach of an European.

But to complete the list we must add many other things. The Stieng has maize, sugar cane, bananas, pine apples, sweet yams, and other tubous roots, several kinds of mushrooms and cucumbers, small onions and aromatic plants; but in consequence of his idleness in cultivating them these are all in too small a quantity to do much service in the supply of the kitchen. Red pepper, and another kind less hot, and ginger, are amongst the seasonings

which he possesses, and of which he makes great use. He might have plenty of delicious fruit if he would take the trouble to plant and cultivate fruit trees; mangos, mangastians, pomegranates, pine apples, oranges, and cocoas would all thrive wonderfully, and would be wonderfully useful and agreeable, and yet it is only rarely that you find here and there some one of these fruits.

Let us return to the animal kingdom. As the forest abounds in game of all kinds, the savage often catches some of it. For this he has his crossbow, his dogs and his snares; some of them have guns. The savage hunts every kind of bird, from the least to the greatest, snipes, ducks, pigeons, partridges, hares, pheasants, and even peacocks would not be despised, I think, by the epicures of our great towns. He hunts all quadrupeds, from the little squirrel to the ponderous elephant, the antelope, the goat, the stag, the boar, and varieties of the ox tribe. Fishing is in equal favour with the chase.

I must not omit the mention of those domestic animals which are not only useful by their labours in their master's service, but are a more wholesome and certain resource for the table than wild ones. Pigs, chickens, and even dogs are common in all the villages, and are generally very numerous. Buffaloes and oxen are frequently met with; they are supported at very little expense, since they pasture in the immense extent of country which is neither cultivated nor even inhabited. Goats are found in some few places, whilst in others they are never seen, and yet in these forests, so full of bushes, of ivy, of leaves and herbs of every kind, there is no domestic animal which would be so easily maintained as this. Tame elephants are rare, though they are found here and there; the Stieng buys them from the Cambogians, or more often from his neighbours the Benongs, who possess a great number, as they know how to take them whilst young in their savage state, in order to tame them afterwards. They have also tame ducks and pigeons, which are everywhere abundant. The cat, so common in Cambogia and Annam is very rarely met with amongst the Stiengs, and of what use would she be? The natives perform her office perfectly well themselves, for to them the flesh of the rat and its kind, is at least as great a dainty as to her. It is amusing to see the noise and ardour with which the little savages we bring up in our house pursue our poor pussies when they are so unfortunate as to appear in sight with a mouse in their jaws.

The usual manner of preparing food is by roasting it, either by simply placing it upon a hot brazier, or by spitting it. Observe that the savage has not always sufficient patience to wait till the meat is thoroughly cooked, before he devours it, he even prefers it

half raw. The blood he consumes without its approaching the fire. He sometimes puts some pieces of flesh mixed with vegetables into a bamboo tube, and dresses it as I have described above.

Having spoken of food, something must also be said about the drink of the Stieng. He sometimes makes arrack from rice, but their earthen pots are so imperfect for distilling, that but little can be produced, and this is fortunate, for as this liquor is very spirituous, if the savage had it at command he would abuse its use frightfully. He does this pretty well with the small quantity he is able to make, as also that of another alcoholic spirit, which is less strong, but common amongst all these savages. This liquor is not distilled; it is made of rice and the leaves of certain trees, which are mixed together and prepared in tubes of bamboo with the addition of a little water. After this they add a certain preparation which occasions fermentation, and then, after some months, the liquor—which is bitter and unpleasant, is fit for use. On the occasion of the tapping of one of the jars in which this liquor is contained, there is a gathering of the savages and great jollity and intoxication ensues, and if they can get a buffalo to eat, it is the *ne plus ultra* of happiness. As soon as they have tasted the liquor, which they suck from the jars through tubes, they become quite mad, and go on for eight or nine successive days and nights, without getting tired. Sometimes there are grand feasts to which several villages are invited, and on these occasions one hundred jars and more are emptied in succession. Ten or fifteen buffaloes are then immolated, and pigs without number. The savage lives only for these feasts, and if he cannot often partake of such great ones, he makes amends for this by multiplying the little ones. As soon as the harvest is over, let him have much or little rice it is the same thing; he begins a series of these bacchanalian meetings, which succeed each other, sometimes in one village sometimes in another, during several months, till at last the scarcity of rice gives the signal for their cessation.

Generally speaking, he is obliged to keep a compulsory Lent during the remainder of the time which elapses before the new harvest, but this matters little, he will not amend; as long as he has rice in sight he will not spare it, as if he even wished to see the end of it, he gives it away, he sells it, he makes it into drink, without thinking of the scarcity which will follow. Everywhere it is the same story, the same improvidence, without the least amendment. Certainly these savages have a very peculiar stomach, since it is able to resist such a diet, and I have never been able to understand how it is that such excesses do not entirely ruin their

health. Another remarkable thing is that in these bacchanalian assemblies, where all present are either tipsy or nearly so, there are very rarely either quarrels or serious accidents. The savage when intoxicated generally retires in silence to lie down, then when he has recovered he returns to the jar, and begins upon it with fresh vigour, leaves it to go and lie down as often as is needful, but always comes back with the same gusto and the same tranquillity, till the feast is at an end. If it sometimes happens that quarrels arise, others interpose and restore peace. This is easily managed. When offensive words or threats have passed, the savages are always ready to say that at the moment *they had lost their senses*, that they knew not either what they did or what they said, and pardon is then very easy on both sides: this is fortunate.

I have not yet mentioned the part taken by the women in these fetes, but it would not be right to forget them, since they are participators, and have a right to approach the jars of cherished liquor. They suck at the syphon like the men, but to their honour it must be said, that they drink with much more moderation, and that it is rare to see them tipsy. I have seen them striking in cadence the tom-tom and the great drum. In short, they take an active part in the festivity, without equalling the men, to whom it is too natural that they should give the precedence.

As rice is the basis of the food and drink of the savage, it is right to say how they procure and cultivate it. Rice grounds are only known in the southern part of the tribe, and are so rare and of so little importance that I only mention them in passing that I may come to speak of the mountain rice which is cultivated throughout the whole country. During the latter part of the dry season the savage cuts down with his little bill all the shrubs, creepers and plants of the corner of the forest which he has determined to select for his field, his garden and his villa. After this he goes over the ground a second time, and with his bill lays low all the bamboos and small trees, taking care that they shall all fall in the same direction in order that he may not be embarrassed in pursuing his work. If there are any large trees he returns a third time to the charge, but this time he is armed with a small hatchet, with which, by dint of time and patience, he succeeds in cutting down all these large trees. Thus, by different stages, he makes a great ruin in the forest, and at the end of the same season, and generally after the first showers which announce the return of the rains, he sets all this wood on fire. Then our ears are saluted with frequent and noisy explosions and a horrible uproar, with

which the forests and the distant mountains resound. At the same time immense wreaths of fire rise into the air, mixed with thick black whirlwinds of smoke. It seems as if the earth were about to shake down the vault of heaven. I have never seen an active volcano, but I can hardly imagine that this phenomenon would present a grander spectacle or one more horribly beautiful.

The ground is now prepared; it remains to sow it. The first thing is to divide it into strips of about ten paces wide, by means of long bamboo poles, laid end to end in parallel lines, then a strong man with a pole in each hand, uses them with such force and rapidity that the whole field is covered with small holes, ready for the reception of the seed. The bamboos which have been laid down serve to direct his steps, so that going over each strip of ground in succession, no corner is left neglected by this original fashioned plough. Several savages generally walk almost close to each other, when performing this operation, which is a very fatiguing one, especially when the ground is still rather hard.

ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 76.—MARCH, 1867.

Our readers are aware that the *Annal* of the Society of the Holy Childhood for the month of *March* always contains the report of the collections of the preceding year, from Great Britain and Ireland. We cannot do better for the encouragement of our subscribers than to place at the head of our present number the following interesting letter from the Archbishop of Baltimore, in the name of the American Episcopate, to the Revd. Canon de Girardin, the Vice-President of the Society, residing in Paris.

Reverend Sir,

You will be as happy to learn as we are to inform you, that your pious appeal in favour of the Society of the Holy Childhood, meets with the full approbation of the American Episcopate.

This approbation is due to a Society which is remarkable amongst so many others, that have also arisen spontaneously out of the inexhaustible fecundity of the Holy Catholic Church, whose powerful energy in saving the world, seems to grow and multiply in proportion to the efforts of infidelity to destroy it.

Accept our thanks, Revd. Sir, for placing before us the edifying picture of the rapid progress of this excellent Society, as well as showing us the fruits of grace which it has borne since the time of its foundation by the holy Bishop de Forbin Janson, whose illustrious name will remain inseparably attached to this living monument of his ardent charity.

We feel confident, Revd. Sir, that being already established in most of the dioceses and houses of Catholic education in the United States of America, the Society of the Holy Childhood will receive a new impulse from the collective recommendations of the Archbishops, and Bishops, assembled in council, and in supporting it with its influence the American Episcopate has the satisfaction of

acting in this, as in all other things, in union both of faith and love, with the glorious and venerated Head of the holy Church of Jesus Christ.

Receive the assurance of my sentiments of respect,

For the Fathers of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore,

Signed: ✠ Augustus Maria Martin, bp. of Natchitaches.

Given in Council, at Baltimore, 20th Oct., 1866.

Signed: Martin John Spalding.

Archbp. of Baltimore, del. Apost.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINESE EMPIRE.

THE LATE MARTYRS OF COREA.

A frightful and sudden storm of fury has just broken loose against the Mission and Christians of Corea.

This Mission is under the care of the Society of Foreign Missions in Paris. It formerly consisted of Bishop Berneux, Vic. Apost., Bishop Daveluy his coadjutor, and ten priests, all Frenchmen. It numbered about eighteen thousand Christians, a really prodigious number, considering that liberty has never been granted to preachers of the gospel, nor even their presence tolerated. In this unfortunate country, the inhabitants of which are gifted with remarkable qualities, and in whose hearts natural feelings still reign, and especially the love of their offspring,* there is neither school, chapel, nor seminary. Worship is performed, and instruction is given in secret; sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, and children are never assembled but by twos and threes. What exertions, blest by Providence, must have been made by those apostles, our bold fellow-countrymen in forming and maintaining the Christian flock which is scattered over the surface of the long peninsula of Corea, a country of mountains, which, though they enclose deep and fertile valleys, offer to the sight, when seen from afar, nothing but the summits and pinnacles of mountains and rocks.

Placed in the midst of the sea, at the extremity of the world, the kingdom of Corea, which is a tributary of China, seems to be cut off from all communication with other nations. Only once a year does

* We read in one of our letters: "The Coreans adore their children. During the cruel famines which are so frequent in Corea, the parents divide with them their last morsel, and these unfortunate little ones expire on their mother's knees, in the midst of their caresses and their tears."

it send an embassy and tribute to the celestial kingdom, and it is by this single opportunity, that furtively, and under disguise, our missionaries or their couriers, can communicate with China, and thence with Europe.

In a private letter of comparatively recent date, (March 30, 1865,) one of the Missionaries in Corea, thus sketches their position. "They are aware of our existence. If they do not seek us out (for we are proscribed by the laws) it is only through fear of Europe. We remain hidden, and never show ourselves openly. The Mandarins and subalterns often vex and pillage us, but yet do not give us up to Corean justice, for fear of embarrassing the Corean government, which does not wish either to compromise itself with Europe by prosecuting us, or with avaricious pagans of rank, if being once denounced, our prosecution should not be carried on."

It will be seen by the affecting letter of Bishop Berneux, the last which we have received from him, and which will appear hereafter, that he had had a shortlived hope of being able to open an orphanage, but that this hope was extinguished by the death of the last king of Corea, and the change which took place in the hostile government which succeeded him.

Such was the position of the missionaries. Of what wonders, then, is that faith capable, which, under the eye of Providence, and obedient to the Saviour's commands, throws itself into the midst of dangers, facing every kind of difficulty, and marching to the conquest of souls, in spite of the impossibility which in a manner exists, of either appearing or acting. This it is, which has won for Jesus Christ eighteen thousand Coreans, most of them zealous and fervent; since everywhere persecuted, they remain constant in faith, in the retreats which they have formed, and many of them have lately, with our martyrs, sealed their baptism of water with the baptism of blood.

All at once, at the same time, that secret orders were issued, for seizing all Christians, and especially the European preachers of the gospel, Bishop Berneux learned from public report that the king wished to see and consult him; he decided to appear before him, and set out at once for the capital, from which he was then at some distance. It appears that he was led with honours into the presence of the sovereign, and then suddenly thrown into prison, with the three priests who accompanied him, and after frightful tortures, they were all put to death. A little later, his worthy coadjutor and four other priests were also put to death.

The names of these nine martyrs, and the dates of the days of their triumph are as follows:—

March 8th, 1866, Bishop *Berneux*, of the diocese of Mans; the

Rev. *Louis Beaulieu*, of the diocese of Bordeaux ; the Rev. *Henry Doris*, of the diocese of Lyons: the Rev. *Rausfer de Brétouières*, of the diocese of Dijon.

March 11th, the Rev. *Charles Pourthie*, of the diocese of Alby ; and the Rev. Mr. *Petitnicolas* of the diocese of Saint Dié.

March 30, *Good Friday*, Bishop *Antony Daveluy*, diocese of Amiens ; the Rev. *Peter Aumanille*, diocese of Angoulême ; the Rev. *Martin Huin*, diocese of Langres.

Three missionaries were able to escape the pursuit of which they were the object. They were the Rev. Fathers Feron, Calais, and Ridel. Having reached the sea shore, they procured a boat, and eight or nine Christians offered to brave the dangers of a stormy sea in this frail skiff, and convey them to China.

The Rev. Fr. Ridel embarked alone, leaving his two companions wandering amongst the mountains, where we hope that God watches over them. After a voyage of eight days, he landed on the shores of China, and exhausted by fatigue, arrived at Peking, where he had the happiness of meeting Rear-Admiral, Mr. Roze.

We learn from the *Moniteur*, that Admiral Roze has received instructions to explore and reconnoitre the coast of Corea, in order that means may be devised for taking vengeance for the French blood which has just been shed.

For ourselves, and our dear associates of the Holy Childhood, at the tomb of our generous martyrs, we can only cry: "Glory be to God ! glory be to France ! glory be to the courageous Society of Foreign Missions !" And to the persecutors, we must say: "Unhappy Corea ! unhappy people." At the same time we pray for the murderers, and we adore the decrees of Providence, thinking with a Father of the Church, that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians." We will beg of Almighty God, that He will take pity on this miserable country, and that He will turn the sacrifice of the dear and valiant apostles, whose heroic constancy He has just crowned, to account for its salvation.

We know already that the news of these events has animated with zeal the holy youth of the seminary of Foreign Missions, and that a new phalanx is burning to visit Corea, and to fill the places of the holy martyrs of whose glory they are envious.

The following is the letter alluded to in the preceding account.

From Bishop Berneux, of the Society of Foreign Missions, Vic. Apost. of Corea, to the Director of the Holy Childhood.

Corea, Nov. 19th, 1864.

It is always with feelings of the deepest gratitude that I re-

ceive the testimonies of interest which the Central Council is each year pleased to give us, as well as the means with which it furnishes us for saving souls; were it not so we should be obliged to leave many neglected from want of means. But happily by your benevolence and the inexhaustible charity of your little angels, we receive the sums we require for this pious work.

Poor Corea is far from being distinguished amongst the different missions which are employed in the baptism and purchase of children; in spite of our endeavours we remain in a state of stagnation which saddens my heart, and for which I see no remedy but religious liberty. As long as we are obliged to keep ourselves strictly hidden, being able to see our Christians but once a year, and then in a hurried manner, as long as persecution obliges our neophytes to retire to the gorges of the mountains to avoid the pagans, with whom contact would be dangerous to their faith, we cannot hope for the prosperity of a society which has all our affections and is indeed our treasure, for small as are the results which we have hitherto obtained, they are amongst the greatest consolations of our ministry.

Seeing that the government appeared disposed to leave the Christians in peace, I had some thought last year of showing my face outside my catacombs, and uniting all my little orphans in two houses, one for boys and the other for girls, in the capital, where I am secretly residing. Besides, the children being thus placed under my direct superintendence, and better taken care of than the families amongst whom they are now scattered, the publicity given to this work would be an excellent way of gaining recruits; but the change which has taken place in the government will probably oblige me to defer the execution of this project. The King of Corea died in January, without children, and was succeeded by a queen, widow of one of his predecessors. This woman, who has always been considered an enemy of religion, has sent away the former ministers, who were favourable to us, and has raised to their place men hostile to our holy cause, and whose characters are such as to make it probable that they will proceed to the last extremities. Hitherto, however, no order, no special edict has been promulgated against the Christians. But the conduct of the inferior mandarins and satellites of the pagan villages towards the new converts who refuse to contribute to their superstitions, the vexatious conduct of families towards any of their members who embrace the faith, form a species of persecution which we have not been spared. Poor Corea is constantly a field of battle, and it might be said that for her especially it has been written that to serve God all must be forsaken, father, mother,

children, houses, fields. We have this sight constantly under our eyes, and it is truly an afflicting one, because these poor people are reduced to such extreme poverty that they sometimes become discouraged. On the other hand, it is often very consoling to see the lively faith with which they make the sacrifices required. A little girl twelve years old came to confession three months ago, in great trouble. When on the accession of the new government there was no talk but of the persecution which was about to break out, her pagan father wished to make her promise that she would no longer serve her true God, he wished her to apostatize; but she would have died a thousand times rather than incur this guilt. As she would not make the promise he required he beat her roughly, and for some time, with his cane. Some pagan women of the neighbourhood, touched with compassion, put an end to her punishment by promising for her that she would no longer practise her religion. Two things singularly tormented this child; first that giving way to the pain of the rod, she had not been able to avoid uttering some cries, and then that she had not protested against the promise made to her father by these pagan women in her name but without her consent.

In spite of the rumours of persecution which continue to disquiet our Christians we have been able to visit every district, and to administer the sacraments to all our Christians. During these visits 12,834 annual confessions have been heard, and 800 adults baptised.

I hope, Rev. Sir, that you will sometimes offer a prayer for Corea. In this confidence I have the honour to be, with profound respect,

Your very humble servant,
Berneux, Vic. Apost. to Corea.

The following are sketches of these holy martyrs.—

The Rev. Simeon Francis Berneux, who was born on the 14th May, 1814, at Chateau-du-Loir (Sarthe) was already a priest, and professor of philosophy at the great seminary of Mans, when in the month of July, 1839, he entered the seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris. Six months afterwards, in January, 1840, he embarked at Havre for the Mission of Western Tong-King. After a short sojourn at Macao, he left this town with Bishop Retord, who was returning from Manilla, where he had just received episcopal consecration on the 3rd January, 1841. The Rev. Fr. Galy and the Rev. Fr. Rivos, Dominican, also accompanied him. The four missionaries were bound for Tong-King.

The Christian faith in that country was tried at that time by the fire of a cruel persecution. Having reached the town of Lhue-Nhao in Tong-King with Fr. Galy, on Easter-day, 1841, Father Berneux and his companion were ordered to Thué, the capital of the Annamite kingdom; here the two missionaries endured with joy all the horrors of a rude imprisonment. The executive tribunal pronounced sentence of death against them, but postponed carrying it into effect. In March, 1843, the two confessors were liberated by M. Lèveque, Captain of the Heroine, who was sent by the brave Admiral Cecile, on the demand of M. Lebais, then Procurator at Macao.

It was Captain Leveque's intention to take back Father Berneux to France; but at his own entreaty he landed him at Bourbon, upon condition that he did not return to the Annamite Missions. Having left Bourbon in the corvette Alcmène, Fr. Berneux returned to Macao, where he arrived at the end of August, 1843, and immediately placed himself at the disposal of his superiors. He much regretted having failed to obtain the palm of martyrdom, and he said to the Procurator of Macao in allusion to the blow of the sabre which was to have cut off his head: "Dear F. Libois, I have lost my little stroke, pray send me to some mission where I may find it."

On the 24th October, 1843, when sending him to Manchouria, where they were in want of missionaries, F. Libois remarked, by way of conversation to Father Berneux: "Manchouria and Corea join; who knows but you may one day cross the frontier to seek in Corea that which you lost at Tong King?"

Appreciating his rare merit, Bishop Verolles, Vic. Apost. of Manchouria, named Father Berneux his coadjutor in 1854, and furnished with powers by the Holy See he consecrated him under the title of Bishop of Tremite *in partibus*. Soon after Bishop Berneux was transferred to the bishopric of Capse, *in partibus*, the title borne by Bishop Imbert, the first Vic. Apost. of Corea, martyred in the year 1839. In 1855 he was himself named Vic. Apost. of Corea, in compliance with the dying request of Bishop Ferreol, who designated him his successor, and the Holy See willingly ratified this last wish of the holy bishop.

Quitting Manchouria, Bishop Berneux then went to Chang-Hai and Hong-Kong, in order to re-establish his health, which had much suffered, but he did not stay there long; he was in haste to return to the new vicariate which he was burning to evangelize. He left Chang-Hai with Fathers Petitnicolas and Pourthié on the 17th Jan. 1856, in a Chinese bark belonging to some Christians of the town, and on the 27th March following the three missionaries arrived at

Saoul, the capital of Corea. It is after an apostolate of ten years that Bishop Berneux has received the crown of his labours in a glorious martyrdom.

Bishop Daveluy, the worthy coadjutor of Bishop Berneux, was born at Amiens on the 16th March, 1818. Educated at St. Sulpice he was ordained priest in 1841, and after having been for some time vicar of St. Peter of Roze, and chaplain to the Ursuline convent in this town, he entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions in 1843. A short time after this he embarked on board the *Archimède* for Macao. In 1845 he first set foot on that land of Corea which after twenty years of labour and fatigue he was at last to moisten with his blood. It must be remarked that the day of his sacrifice and that of his two companions was Good Friday.

The *Rev. Bernard Louis Beaulieu* was born on the 8th October, 1840, at Langon (diocese of Bordeaux); he entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions on the 28th August, 1863, being already a deacon, and was ordained priest on the 24th June, 1864. The youngest of our generous confessors, he was but twenty-six years old on the day of his glorious martyrdom.

The *Rev. Peter Henry Dorie* was born on the 29th September, 1839, at St. Hilaire de Talmont (diocese of Luçon); he had only received Minor Orders when he entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions, the 13th August, 1862. He was ordained priest the 24th May, 1864, at the same time with the *Rev. Ranfer de Bestenières*.

The *Rev. Simeon Mary Antony Justin Ranfer de Bestenières*, born on the 28th February, 1838, at Chalons-sur-Saône, was originally of the diocese of Dijon. After having gone through his course of philosophy and received the tonsure at the seminary of Issy, near Paris, he entered the Foreign Missions the 23rd July, 1861.

The *Rev. Martin Luke Huin*, was born at Guyanville (canton of Ferté, diocese of Langres) on the 20th October, 1836. He entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions on the 26th August, 1863, having already been a Priest for more than two years.

These four young apostles left France the 19th July, 1864, arrived at Chang Hai, and from thence went to Manchouria, where they remained for some time with Bishop de Verolles, devoting themselves to prayer and the study of the Chinese language. In June 1865, after great perils, they at last reached their destination. It was therefore less than a year after their entrance into Corea, and almost at the commencement of their apostolate, that their devotion was rewarded with the crown of martyrdom.

The *Rev. Peter Aumaitre*, born at Aizecq (canton Ruffec, diocese d'Angoulême) the 8th April, 1837, entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions, on the 18th August, 1859, and on the same day, three years later, he set out for Corea, but in consequence of a delay, did not land there till June, 1863. He therefore only laboured in this mission for two years and nine months, and still young, he completed his sacrifice by the side of his bishop, Dr. Daveluy.

The *Rev. Michael Alexander Petitnicolas* was born at Coinches (diocese of St. Dec.) on the 21st August, 1828. On the 20th August, 1853, he sailed for the mission of Pondicherry; two years later he was ordered to Corea, and arrived at Hang-Yang with Bishop Berneux and M. Pourthie, the 27th March, 1856. The energy of his will supplied his want of bodily strength; his zeal was indefatigable. He was obliged, however, to give up the active ministry of the apostolate, and devote himself with M. Pourthie, to the duties of the seminary. He was there for five years during which time he made a complete dictionary of the Corean language.

The *Rev. Charles Antony Pourthie*, Provic. Apost. was born on the 20th December, 1830, in a cottage in the canton of Valence en Albigeois (diocese of Albi). Having entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions, the 30th June, 1854, he set out for Corea the 27th June, the following year. Simply at the desire of his bishop he hesitated not to sacrifice his taste for the active duties of the apostolate, and devoted himself also to the direction of the Seminary of the Mission. M. Pourthie did immense service by applying himself to the formation of a body of native clergy. He loved natural science, and had collected some curious notes on this subject. He had also begun a work on the Corean language. The loss of such a learned missionary is much to be regretted.

CHINA.

Extract from a letter from the Right Rev. Dr. Louis da Castellazzo, Minor Observantin, Vic. Apost. of Xan-Tong and administrator of Xan-Si, to the Director of the Holy Childhood.

(Translated from the Italian.)

Xan Si, 2nd Nov. 1865.

After some earnest entreaties for further assistance in favour of the poor little orphans of the mission of Xan-Si the bishop thus continues:—

.....I cannot finish my letter without telling you of the many consolations which are experienced by the Catholic missionary when exercising his ministry in these foreign countries, and amongst these the happiness of arriving in time to send to heaven so many little beings abandoned by their inhuman parents does not hold the least important place. There is a peculiar feeling which induces us to bless divine providence more when a little child is snatched from the power of the devil, than when an adult is converted to the faith. I experienced this pure joy some months ago, when I heard the following facts related by a European missionary.

Having been requested by a Christian family residing amongst the western mountains to carry the consolations of our religion to a sick person, the missionary, after travelling about one hundred miles, was yet not more than half way to the end of his journey. Fatigued by its length, he sat down under a tree to rest, and on this very spot Providence was waiting to give him an opportunity for performing a charitable act. He heard a small voice, as of a person in pain, and being unable to guess from whom it proceeded, he ran towards the spot from which the lamentations appeared to proceed, and he then perceived, horrible sight! the head of a little girl three years old, which rose out of the ground. He shuddered at the sight; he could not understand how the ferocity of parents could reach such a point as to induce them to bury their children alive. He hastened to exhume this semi-corpses from its grave, giving it a double life. I say *semi-corpses*, because the worms which were engendered were already pasturing upon this tender body. He tried however to give her a morsel of bread; and in less time than I take to write it, she had devoured it. But God, who had reserved her for the grace of baptism, resolved to perfect His work; her wounds were speedily healed, and now the good little Amelia begins to learn her prayers, to serve God, to thank Him for the double grace she has received, to call down His abundant blessings upon the associates of the Holy Childhood, and finally to beg them to send us, by safe means, a part of the large alms which the charity of our little Europeans dedicates to the succour of these unfortunate little forsaken ones.

It happens pretty frequently that the pagans themselves, though too depraved to give up their idolatry, yet get their dying children baptised by Christians; thus showing that they incline towards our religion. It also often happens that we find children of two or three years old left at the doors of our huts; but what makes us shudder is to see these poor little ones exposed in the markets as animals are in Europe, and hear such an invitation as this

given to us as we travel through these unfortunate countries: "Ja-jin (great man) here is a little girl, or two or three, which we will give you for one or two ounces of silver." Our heart bleeds that we cannot snatch all of them from the hands of their unnatural parents. We are however able to purchase a few out of the great number, and the more we purchase the more we wish to purchase, but then after we have purchased and baptised them, they have to be fed, and for this we want much help. In the name of these tender babes we offer you beforehand our warmest gratitude for the alms which your charity will no doubt kindly send us.....

Pray accept, &c.

Brother Louis de Castellazzo, Minor Observantine,
Vic. Apost. of Xan Tong and Administrator of Xan Si.

Extract of a letter from Sister Madeleine, Daughter of Charity, at Ning-Po, to Madame de Cagueray, her mother.

House of the Infant Jesus, Ning-Po, 15 Aug. 1864.

Our house is, as its name indicates, one of those of the Holy Childhood. It is an asylum for little boys forsaken by their parents, who are brought to us in great numbers, whilst the little girls go to the house at Ning-Po, which bears the name of St. Vincent. If they are still infants, after having them baptised, they are placed at nurse, and generally die very soon, as the pagan women, under whose care they are usually placed, do not bestow upon them as much attention as is desirable. Those whom it does not please the Lord to take, are brought back to the house at the end of two years. They are then placed in the nursery, and are removed later to the school, where they are taught to know and to love God.

If they are old enough to follow the rules of the house when first brought to us, they are placed at once under the care of the Sisters, who thoroughly act the part of mothers in their regard, and immediately begin to instruct and prepare them for holy baptism. We had an affecting ceremony on the day of the Epiphany, thirteen of our children who had been taken by the rebels, and delivered by the missionaries, I hardly know how, received this sacrament with great devotion. There were to have been fifteen or sixteen, but the baptism of two or three was deferred on account of their not being sufficiently prepared. When these dear boys so blessed by Providence, attain their fifteenth or eighteenth

year, they are apprenticed out, and every Sunday they return to hear Mass and amuse themselves under the superintendence of one of our Sisters. By this means we have the happiness to preserve them from the danger to which their faith is exposed in the midst of an entirely pagan population. There are some, it is true, who grieve our hearts by their defection, but the number is small. Most of them behave very well, and are preparing a Christian generation, for we are careful that they shall only marry girls who are worshippers of the true God. Two sisters go over every day to visit those who are sick, both in the town and the neighbouring villages, and are thus often the means of conferring baptism on poor little dying creatures.

Another special work, both at Ning-Po and our own house, is giving assistance to the poor unhappy creatures, poisoned by opium. Not a week passes but we are sent for to cure some of these poor Chinese, both men and women, (the latter poison themselves more frequently than the men,) who have eaten one hundred and twenty sapees worth of opium. We are called to these people night and day, it is but seldom that by means of a powerful emetic we do not recover them.

But now, you will say, "Dear child what is your employment?" I have many; but I am particularly charged with the care of the infirmary for the little Chinese. We have here the blind, the hunchbacked, idiots, and the lame, in every kind of way. Out of about two hundred children, who are in our house, more than one hundred are suffering in consequence of the little care bestowed upon them by their parents, and the frightful treatment they endured from the rebels when they devastated the country three years ago.

Dear mother, let us bless the Lord for having inspired so many generous hearts with a love for the Holy Childhood, and the propagation of the Faith, these admirable societies, which are here doing such wonders, and do you, dear mother, thank Him very specially for having called me hither, to be the instrument, though an unworthy one, of His mercy and goodness.

EAST INDIES.

From Brother Antony Mary, Capuchin, to the Director of the Society.

Reverend Sir,

Permit me to send you a few lines to announce the death of a missionary of our Vicariat, who has laboured much in making

known the Holy Childhood, and who has been the means of saving a great number of little pagans.

The name of the Rev. Father Raphael de Bavière has appeared in some of the Numbers of your Annals; it is his loss which we now lament, recommending him to the prayers of the members of the Holy Childhood. The good Father died on the day of the Assumption, at Trinalpore, and under the tent where he had passed the whole of this burning summer, occupied about the building of a new church. He died the victim of his zeal and obedience, assisted by all the consolations of our holy religion, and at the age of forty-three, ten years of which he had passed in India.

Permit me, Rev. Sir, to avail myself of this opportunity to say a few words respecting the famine which has ravaged a great part of India this year.

The news from Orissa is heartrending. Calcutta, whither all flee, overflows with unfortunate beings. I was there upon business a few days ago, and during my stay, there was a distribution of money, which was, however, made with so little precaution, that owing to the great press of these poor creatures, about twenty men, women, and children, were trodden under foot. The other day, I found a woman lying with her face to the ground on the high road, and dying of hunger with her two little children. She had passed the night in this position. I had her carried to the orphanage.

Four miles from this place, a woman has cut her own infant in pieces, boiled, and devoured it. In the South, women have been seen to throw their children into wells, having no longer any food for them; and even here, poor women gather the dirt from the streets and wash it carefully to find any grains which may remain in it. Happily, the harvest presents the fairest appearance, and God willing, we shall see the end of these horrors.

This famine has caused an abundant gathering for heaven. Pagan children are brought to us every day. Every day we baptise some, and as they almost always come with the germs of death already implanted in their little bodies, there is hardly a day in which one or other of these little angels does not escape to heaven, to rejoin our holy Bishop Hartmann, who did so much for them.

The Rev. Fr. John Baptist, Vic. Gen. and Missionary at Belliah, although a septuagenarian, has all the zeal of a young missionary for the salvation of these poor children. There are at this moment more than eighty divided amongst his Indian Christians, and maintained at his expense out of his own funds.

We are still without a Vic. Apost. as well as Calcutta and Agra, and thus the whole of northern India is without a Bishop.

Pray accept the renewed assurance of profound respect and entire devotion with which I have the honour to be, Rev. Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Fr. Anthony Mary,

Capuchin, Sec. to the Province of Patua.

AFRICA.—MISSION OF SENEGAMBIA.

Report addressed by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kobes, Vic. Apost. of Senegambia, to the Governor of Senegal, in the Agricultural Colony of St. Joseph.

31 Dec., 1865.

This Report comprises :—The operation in cleaning the cotton (freeing it from the seeds) during the year 1865; the labour of cultivation during the latter half of this year, and the invasion of locusts, and their injuries in the month of December.

156,105 kgs. of cotton appears to have been grown on the estates, of which quantity 40,268 was cleaned in the workshops of the establishment.

This operation was effected by machines after Macarthy's system, three of which only were at work in the month of March; soon after there were four. In September, the number had increased to seven. Three more have just been added, and with ten machines for cleaning, an average of 3,000 hecatogrammes per week may be easily produced; equivalent to 9 or 12,000 uncleaned, according to the nature of the cotton.

The Agricultural Colony of St. Joseph has been divided this year for cultivation into three quarters or villages; St. Joseph, St. Benedict, and St. Michael.

The workers so-called (women and children not included) were during the latter half of the year 250, of whom 125 were retained at St. Joseph, 50 at St. Benedict, and 75 at St. Michael.

The labourers at St. Joseph and St. Benedict only worked four days a week for the Colony. The two other days were granted them for cultivating the fields which have been given them, either by individuals or by families on their own account. Several individuals of St. Michael, not yet Christians, have employed the Sunday in forming fields of millet, but this we discountenance as much as possible.

At the end of June, 200 acres of land had been cleared, and

were ready for sowing with the first rains; 50 at St. Joseph, 30 at St. Benedict, 48 at St. Michael, and 72 belonging to the labourers of each of these quarters.

All these fields were sown with cotton, maize, millet, rice, &c., &c., and besides this, attempt at the cultivation of resin and indigo, have been made in the garden of the Mission.

Cotton Plantations.—During the last half of this year, 95 acres have been sown with cotton in the three quarters.

The most important plantation has been undertaken at St. Michael, on ground which has never been cultivated, 45 acres having been sown in this quarter. It has succeeded perfectly. The plants are tall, regular, loaded with flowers and seed vessels, and promising as abundant a harvest as could possibly be expected for the first year. This field is very superior to that at St. Antoine de Sarene, which excited last year the admiration of the commandant of Goree and the officers who accompanied him.

20 acres have been planted with cotton at St. Benedict instead of a plantation of millet, which in great part failed.

10 acres have been sown at St. Joseph in the millet fields. And besides this, 20 acres have been planted by the labourers in their own fields, either with millet or rice.

Our plantations have been injured first by the emigrating locusts in the month of August, and then by the common locust, which remained in considerable numbers for nearly three months in our gardens and neighbourhood, and have besides destroyed all our vegetables. They did not disappear till after the rains.

Plantations of different kinds.—Millet 130 acres; 60 on account of the establishment, and 70 on account of the labourers. The millet, called *Sagnan*, succeeded perfectly, but at St. Michael and St. Joseph, the *Sanua* was completely destroyed by the locusts at the very time when the ears were in flower; the large millet succeeded perfectly.

Maize, 15 acres. Seed of maize were purchased at St. Louis. They were sown at St. Michael between the cotton plants, but some of this never came up, and the remainder was eaten by the worms as fast as it appeared above ground. Seed which came from Dahar, preserved in the ear, has come up and produced in the garden of the mission.

Rice, one and a half acre. The rice was sown by way of trial in what is called the Jaun de la Fasma, and excepting a small quantity which was destroyed by salt water succeeded very well. The rice is cultivated by women.

Arachides, one acre. The cultivation of this grain was only made on trial at St. Michael, the ground not being supposed to be

sufficiently sandy. But the experiment was successful, the crop being good and abundant.

Indigo was successfully planted as a border to the alleys of the garden, and the large (*ricin*) was sown in a square at the beginning of the rains, but it only grew vigorously after their cessation.

Harvests.—The different kinds of millet were gathered in September, October, November, and December respectively, and though the exact return for each one has not yet been ascertained, the harvest is considered abundant by the natives.

The first cotton was sown on the 29th June, and the first seed was gathered the 28th September. But properly speaking the harvest only begins in December, and continues till the rains.

Such are the agricultural labours of the second six months of 1865, and such especially was the state of the cotton plantations. Everything promised a harvest which should cover the expenses incurred at the commencement, when the locusts, that scourge which in a certain degree renders useless all the endeavours of man, annihilated in a few hours the fruits of three years of sacrifice and toil.

Invasion of Locusts.—During the latter half of this year the migrating locusts (*acridium migratorium*) have appeared three times in our plantations. First, on the 18th August, then on the 25th November, and lastly from the 15th to the 25th December. The last visitation only was disastrous.

In the month of August they twice crossed our fields and devoured some of the young cotton plants, and the ears of millet which were in flower. After this, they settled on the sands which surround the marsh of La Fasna, deposited their eggs and died. At this time they were yellow.

After a time the young ones were hatched, as is well known without wings, and were left quiet till the end of September. When they began to grow, two hundred men from the villages of St. Michael and St. Antoine, were employed in chasing them after the accustomed manner, which is by pushing them in a mass into a ditch dug on purpose, in the sand, and then covering them up. Thus all those hatched amongst us were completely exterminated; but it appeared that they were not equally so in adjoining countries.

In fact, on the afternoon of the 25th September, a prodigious cloud from Naiegnan visited us, driven by the east wind, but a contrary wind having risen they were compelled to retreat. On the following days they were just distinguished from time to time upon the furthest horizon. This time they did no mischief.

At last they returned for ten days on the 15th December.

This time they were more numerous than we had seen them for four years, when they assembled in the bay of la Fasna. At first they only went and returned between the point of Sàrène and that of Diouth, without settling on our fields. The number was so immense that the progress, which began at 9 a.m. over an extent of six miles, formed at six o'clock a line of from thirty to forty miles, leaving at the point of departure a thick red cloud which completely hid the horizon. There was not much mischief done till the 19th, they were content to eat the tenderest leaves of the Sedem and some other trees, hardly touching the cotton plants, but on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd of December our garden and our fields were literally invaded. In the garden of the mission nothing was spared. All the flowers and vegetables disappeared, except some seedlings which were carefully covered with cloth daily from nine to six o'clock. Papays, bananas, marriacs, mangoes, cetians, coffee trees, indigo plants, the experimental nursery for foreign cottons, the plants sent from Jaoury, in a word, all the trees of the garden and the neighbourhood, the *roudin* excepted, have been completely despoiled of their leaves and had their soft part eaten out.

In the fields the most tender cotton plants were entirely devoured, leaves, flowers, stems, down to the ground; those in which the wood was harder had the flowers, the leaves, and the herbaceous parts of the branches eaten, and the bark of the woody part gnawed. The chief part of the seed vessels already matured, cut off at the stalk, showed the sail-like nuts just beaten down; a few only remained suspended to the most woody branches, by their strong stalks, but completely stripped of bark. It was sad to see.

To crown our misfortune, wishing to drive away these voracious devastators by setting fire in different places to dry grass, but regarding carefully the direction of the wind, we were imitated by some imprudent workpeople, and even by strangers, who without waiting for orders lighted fires close to our cotton trees of the second and third years. By the power of the east wind the fire passed across them, and in a moment our haystack, stables, and other buildings were in imminent danger of destruction.

During the whole of this time the east wind prevailed night and day, while the sea breeze did not blow for a single moment.

Our losses are greater than appeared at first sight. The whole of the cotton plantation of the present half year is destroyed, and nearly two-thirds of the cotton plants of the second and third years are burned; what remains is completely despoiled of leaves, so that the harvest for the year has entirely failed, and instead of 250 bales which we hoped for, we shall have at most eight or ten.

Three acres of millet, which was not yet quite ripe, has been also destroyed.

It is impossible to appreciate justly the amount of these losses, because the cotton plant being long lived the consequences of the ravages extend over several years.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kobes, Vic. Apost. of Senegambia, to the Superior-General of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Heart of Mary.

Dakar, 30th Jan. 1836.

Very Rev. Father,

Our dear Lord has called upon us to make another sacrifice. A quarter of the village of Joal has just been burned down. The community house of the fathers, and the church have fallen a prey to the flames. Of the church the four walls alone remain, and of the wooden house of Fr. Lamaise nothing but ashes. Here are the particulars, given me by the Fathers Lacombe and Lamoise.

Fr. Lamoise and the commandant of the post had been arranging with the chief of the village about preparing the cemetery. It was agreed that the clearing should be done with the *ilere* (an instrument of the country) instead of by setting fire to the dry herbs. The work having been commenced, one of the chiefs went to call the commandant and Father Lamoise, that they might fix the boundaries of the cemetery, and then have it surrounded with a hedge, that the people might thus be prevented from placing dirt there as had hitherto been their custom. Before the return of the chief and the arrival of the commandant, two or three old men, in order to proceed more rapidly with their work, set fire to the grass. The wind blew strongly from the east, in consequence of which the fire begun at the cemetery crossed a quarter of the village in the direction of the military part, (which having a terrace gave it no hold) seized the straw which covered the church, and reduced the whole of it to ashes. The robes and sacred ornaments of the sacristy have almost all been saved, and the Blessed Sacrament was removed in time. We were obliged to keep It by the sea side during the height of the fire, and it was only when this had abated that It could be carried to the sisters' parlour. The house of the native religious is only separated from our community by a street, and the poor sisters were in great consternation; but as they were rather out of the course of the wind, they

were spared. They it was who saved the ornaments of the sacristy.

I have announced this sad news, by a telegram, to the Governor of Senegal, and by the ordinary courier I have transmitted to him the details I have just given you of this disaster. I informed him at the same time that this fresh loss, added to the ravages at St. Joseph, rendered it impossible for me to repair the mischief, and for the present there was nothing to be done but to withdraw the staff and the establishment of the mission from Joal;—the missionary and his school, because there is not either house, or place of worship, or school—the native sisters with their orphanage and school, because it is not allowable to leave a religious community of women, in a place where there is no priest. May the colonial administration come to our aid !

I beg you, Very Rev. Father, kindly to plead our cause with the Committees of the Propagation of the Faith and Holy Childhood. I have forgotten to tell you that the walls of the church are not seriously damaged, but if they are not covered in before the rainy season, all will be completely lost.

I hope that our venerated father, the founder of this mission, and the anniversary of whose death coincides with the feast of the patron saint of Joal, will not abandon us, and that he will obtain from the God of mercy, some unexpected help which may permit us to preserve this dear mission.

I embrace you, my Very Rev. Father, in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

A. L. Kobes, Bp. of Madon, Vic. Apost.

POLYNESIA.—SANDWICH ISLANDS.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Louis Maigret, Bp. of Arathia, Vic. Apost. of the Sandwich Islands, to the little associates of the Holy Childhood.

Honolulu, 18th July, 1866.

Dear little associates of the Holy Childhood,

We are come to the middle of the year 1866, and I have not yet written to you, so I now set to work to remind you of your old friend. I have just made a very long journey of three months upon a little white mule, which I would not exchange, were it my own, for all the mules in the world. He has most wonderful qualities; all roads are alike to him, he never stumbles, nothing annoys him. He seems as if he never feels the wish

either to eat or drink, and for an animal of his species he is astonishingly docile. He has made the tour of the great island of our archipelago, and I assure you that at the completion of it he appeared no more fatigued than on the first day. Also, so far as I am concerned no accident happened.

Unfortunately, I cannot say as much for one of my companions, the Rev. Fr. Charles Pouzot. One day we were ascending a steep hill: he behind and I in front. All at once I heard a cry of distress, and at the same moment I saw the animal on which Father Charles had been mounted pass by me with the rapidity of lightning, dragging at the end of a cord a long cloak in which I felt sure no package for the journey could be wrapped. Alas! I said to myself, the good father has got entangled in the cloak in falling, and here he is like St. Hippolytus, dragged over stones by a horse rendered furious by terror. I left my mule, and on reaching the cloak, which at last had, I know not how, separated from the animal, I saw the good Father Charles extended across the road on the ground. He was not dead; the girth had broken; the saddle had slipped with him over the crupper of the horse, and he fell upon his right arm. Young Kanach, who was following us, came to the examination and then said: "There is nothing broken; the Father has not even a scratch; he suffers, for his nerves have been shaken, but he will get off with having to wear his arm for a time in a sling." So I was much relieved, and full of gratitude to God and the holy angels, who as you see, dear little associates, always protect missionaries when they travel.

But here I have something else to relate. My mule, good as he is, apparently not thinking the accident any joke, having deposited me on the ground, went to rejoin his companion, who was far in advance. Without much thought I went off in pursuit, and ran as fast as my legs of sixty-two years old could carry me. I reached the top of the hill quite out of breath, and saw my two friends in the distance, who having slackened their pace were walking quietly along. At last I reached them, and they suffered me to catch and lead them to the place where I had left Fr. Charles. We mended the broken girth as well as we could; we helped the good father to remount, and recommenced our journey to visit our Christian people. We found sympathy everywhere, and all were ready to lavish the most delicate attentions on Father Charles. He gets better and better, yet he still suffers, and may do so for a long time; but his zeal for the glory of God makes him forget this, and he seems as gay and joyful as before. God be a thousand times praised!

More than once, dear little friends, in our interesting conversa-

tions with your little brothers and sisters in the faith we have thought of you, and admired together the wonders worked amongst us by the blessed society of which you are members. Do not then forsake us. Now more than ever we require your assistance. Our sugar cane planters being in want of labourers, go to China for them, and they arrive here with their wives and children by hundreds. These Chinese, you are aware, do not know the true God; they are idolators. Their children are all slaves of the devil. Oh! if we could procure them the grace of Baptism, and open the gates of heaven to them, what happiness for them, what joy for us! So you see there is always plenty of good to be done here, and there will be perhaps much more at a future time. In the name of the Infant Jesus, your divine model, I beseech you to continue and enlarge your labour of love. Think of those who are now in heaven, and who owe the salvation of their souls to you; think of those who bless you whilst still upon earth; think of those who not yet Christians, will become so, if you extend your hand to them. Oh! how many millions of children may become children of God like yourselves, and inheritors of the celestial kingdom, if you love them and will take them under your care. Love them, then, for your love will bring them happiness, and their parents will no doubt one day participate in their joy.

I am acquainted with a Chinese here named Alama, who had a child baptised by the name of Michael. This Chinese falling ill, was taken to the hospital. One of our missionaries, Father Hermann, one day entered the hall where he was. As soon as he perceived him he called him to him, and said: "Father Hermann, have the goodness to baptise me. I have long desired baptism," he added, "I begged for it at the consecration of the church of St. Raphael at Kouai, in 1856, but I was told that I was not worthy, and very rightly. But now I really intend to forsake sin and give myself entirely to God." Alama spoke the truth. After a few days of trial, Father Hermann baptised him. He left the hospital soon after, entirely cured, and is now a model of fervour and piety. He attends mass every day, and frequently approaches the holy table. He has laid down a rule of life which he observes with the punctuality of a monk. He associates only with devout persons. He is affable to all; he is never angry, and always ready to do a service. He is a joiner by trade, and works hard, but he gets little profit, for Chinese joiners are not in vogue here. That little is however enough for his own support, and the clothing of his dear little Michael, who is brought up in one of our establishments. So I was right in telling you just now that your friendship for the children brings happiness to the parents also. I could

bring other examples of the same kind, but you will say perhaps that I shall never finish. I conclude then by recommending myself, through you, to the Infant Jesus, and by begging you to believe me always, dear little associates,

Your devoted old friend,

✠ Louis, Bp. of Arathia,

Vic. Apost. of the Sandwich Islands.

REPORT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS AND EXPENSES,

Connected with the Society of the Holy Childhood in the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, from Jan. 1866 to Jan. 1867.

ENGLAND.

WESTMINSTER.

	£.	s.	d.
London	5	19	0
.. Brompton	11	12	6
.. Highgate	1	0	0
Newhall	1	10	6
	20	2	0

BEVERLEY.

Richmond	3	0	
.. Convent of the Assump- tion	4	0	0
Stourton	1	2	6
	5	5	6

BIRMINGHAM.

Baddesley Convent.. .. .	1	0	0
Banbury Convent	11	3	
Birmingham, St. Ann's Convent..	9	0	
.. Handsworth, Convent of Mercy	12	0	
Erdington Convent of Mercy	13	0	
Leamington	1	0	0
Onlton Convent	10	0	
Princethorpe Convent	1	0	0
Rugby, Convent of Providence	16	6	
Radford	10	0	
Spetchley	1	13	0
Wootton	4	10	8
Wolverhampton	3	8	0
Worcester	2	0	0
	18	13	5

CLIFTON.

Arno's Court Conv. of the Good Shepherd	1	4	0
Kemerton	6	0	
Warder	10	1	0
	17	11	0

HEXHAM.

	£.	s.	d.
Birtley	18	0	
Darlington, St. Clare's Convent ..	1	2	6
	2	0	6

LIVERPOOL.

Blackpool	12	0	
Liverpool, Convent of Notre Dame	10	0	0
Wigan, Convent of Notre Dame	5	0	0
	15	12	0

MENEVIA AND NEWPORT.

The Bishop	1	0	0
Belmont	20	0	0
Bullingham Convent	1	8	10
Newport, Convent of Providence..	13	7	
	23	2	5

NORTHAMPTON.

Norwich, Convent of Notre Dame	3	0	0
Northampton, Convent of Notre Dame	1	4	0
	4	4	0

NOTTINGHAM.

Anonymous	10	0	
Glossop	14	0	
Grace Dieu	10	0	
Garendon	3	9	8
Loughborough, Convent of Provi- dence	1	0	0
Nottingham, Convent of Mercy ..	4	10	8
Radcliffe College	2	11	6
St. Bernard's Abbey	2	14	6
.. Reformatory	1	7	7
Shephard	1	0	6
Whitwick	8	0	
	18	16	5

PLYMOUTH.

	£.	s.	d.
Lulworth	1	8	0
Lanherne, Carmelite Convent ..	1	6	6
Stapehill, Cistercian Convent ..	8	4	
Ugbrooks	6	0	
	3	9	10

SHREWSBURY.

Dee House Convent.. ..	1	0	0
Higher Tranmere	3	0	0
Holt Hill Convent	1	0	0
Upton Hall Convent	1	0	0
	6	0	0

SALFORD.

Manchester, Convent of Notre Dame	1	4	0
Stacksteads	7	0	
	1	11	0

SOUTHWARK.

Bresby	5	0	
Clayford	10	0	
Gosport	6	0	
London, Convent of St. George ..	8	10	0
Reading	1	0	6
Norwood Convent	2	2	0
Hyde	15	6	
	13	9	0

TOTAL FROM ENGLAND.

Westminster	20	2	0
Beverley	5	5	6
Birmingham	18	13	5
Clifton	11	11	0
Hexham	2	0	6
Liverpool	15	12	0
Menevia and Newport	23	2	5
Northampton	4	4	0
Nottingham	18	16	5
Plymouth	3	8	10
Shrewsbury	6	0	0
Salford	1	11	0
Southwark	13	9	0
	143	16	1

SCOTLAND.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

	£.	s.	d.
Edinburgh, St. Margaret's Convent	12	0	
„ St. Ann's Seminary ..	12	6	
	1	4	6

WESTERN DISTRICT.

Glasgow, Franciscan Convent ..	6	0	
Laggan	18	0	
	1	4	0

TOTAL FROM SCOTLAND.

Eastern District	1	4	6
Western District	1	4	0
	2	8	6

RECEIPTS.

England and Wales	143	16	1
Scotland	2	8	6
Kentucky, America	5	0	0
	151	4	7
Deduct Expenses	36	4	7
Sent to Paris, Jan. 26, 1867 ..	115	0	0
Acknowledged Feby. 4th.			

EXPENSES.

	£.	s.	d.
Printing Annals	4	6	0
No. 69	4	13	6
No. 70	5	17	9
No. 71	4	9	9
No. 72	4	8	0
No. 73	5	5	0
No. 74	29	0	0
Carriage of Annals to India ..	1	13	0
Pictures	1	4	0
Carriage to Paris	13	0	
Postage of 6 Annals to America ..	2	2	
Stamps for Annals and Letters ..	3	12	5
	36	4	7

HOLY CHILDHOOD REPORT FOR IRELAND,

FROM JANUARY, 1866, TO JANUARY, 1867.

ARMAGH.

	£.	s.	d.
Woodvale	6	0	

KILMORE.

Cootahill	2	18	0
Castlerahan School	6	0	
	3	4	0

MEATH.

	£.	s.	d.
Convent of Mercy, Kell	10	0	0
Frankford	6	0	
Convent of Mercy, Tullamore ..	1	0	0
	11	6	6

ABDAGH.

Convent of Mercy, Moate.. ..	12	0	0
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TUAM.

	£.	s.	d.
Convent of Mercy, Tuam ..	2	0	0
Convent of Mercy, Ballinrobe ..	2	0	0
Convent of Mercy, Westport ..	3	14	0
	7	14	0

KILLALOE.

Convent of Mercy, Birr ..	5	18	0
Borrisokane ..	10	0	
	6	8	0

GALWAY.

Galway ..	6	0	
Convent of Mercy ..	3	0	
	9	0	

ACHONRY.

Sisters of Charity, Benada Abbey	8	13	0
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CASHEL.

Presentation Convent, Thurles ..	3	0	0
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DERBY.

Convent of Mercy ..	3	4	9
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DOWN AND CONNOR.

Crossgar ..	1	1	0
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FERNS.

Mount Carmel Convent, New Ross	1	10	0
Enniscorthy ..	2	0	0
	3	10	0

KILDARE AND LEIGHLIN.

Presentation Convent, Paulstown	2	10	0
Baltinglass ..	19	10	
Presentation Convent, Stradbally	9	0	
Gowran ..	1	4	0
Philpstown ..	6	0	
	5	8	10

CORK.

Ursuline Convent ..	11	12	0
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RECEIPTS.

Ireland, ..	182	9	3
Deduct Expenses ..	47	9	3
Sent to Paris, (acknowledged Feb. 16th) ..	135	0	0

Several sums received too late will be acknowledged in next year's Report.

LIMERICK.

Limerick ..	10	0	
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WATERFORD.

Waterford ..	12	6	0
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DUBLIN.

Rathmines ..	3	6	6
Loretto Convent, Dalkey ..	1	5	0
Tranquille Convent, Rathmines (for 1865 and 1866) ..	16	0	7
Convent of St. Theresa, Warrenmount ..	9	12	1
Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham ..	1	0	0
Hampton Convent, Drumconcha ..	3	0	
Dublin ..	46	15	0
Convent of the Sisters of Charity, North William Street ..	4	1	6
Carmelite Monastery, Harpold's Cross ..	13	4	
Delgany ..	16	4	
Convent Glasnevin ..	15	0	
Loretto Convent, Balbriggan ..	3	0	0
Orphanage Lakelands, Sandy-mount ..	3	6	
Presentation Convent, Clondalkin	1	4	4
	88	16	2

TOTAL FROM IRELAND.

Dioceses of	£.	s.	d.
Armagh ..	0	6	0
Derry ..	3	4	8
Down and Connor ..	1	1	0
Kilmore ..	3	4	0
Meath ..	11	6	6
Ardagh ..	12	0	0
Ferns ..	3	10	0
Kildare and Leighlin ..	5	8	0
Cork ..	11	12	0
Limerick ..	10	0	
Waterford ..	12	6	0
Killaloe ..	6	8	0
Tuam ..	7	14	0
Galway ..	9	0	
Achonry ..	8	13	0
Cashel ..	3	0	0
Dublin ..	88	16	2
	179	9	3

From the Rev. Father Browne, Newfoundland ..	3	0	0
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Total ..	182	9	3
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EXPENSES.

Printing of Annals and Pictures	43	3	1
Postage ..	4	6	2
	47	9	3

ANNALS
OF THE
Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 77.—MAY, 1867.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

From the Rev. M. Vielmon, of the Society of Foreign Missions,
Miss. Apost. at Kouy-Tcheou, to the Director of the Society
of the Holy Childhood.

Kouy-Yang-Fou, capital of Kouy-Tcheou, 21st Dec. 1865.

Reverend Sir,

It is long since I had the honour of writing to you. Unforeseen circumstances have deprived me of the pleasure which I always feel in giving you an account of the rapid progress of the Society of the Holy Childhood at Kouy-Tcheou, the details of which the committee of the Society always receive with such kind interest.

God has been pleased to make use of me for great purposes. Several native tribes who have lived for some years in a state of revolt, having heard of the good understanding which subsists between the Viceroy Lao-Ta-jeu and Bishop Faurie, had subsequently to his lordship's pastoral visit in 1864, entreated him to procure acceptance of their submission.

The Mussulmans of Hin-Y-fou, who had been in a state of revolt for a much longer time, seeing that no account of the past had been required of these natives, had recourse to the same mediator to negotiate their submission also. Bishop Faurie had just returned to the capital, when the Mussulman deputies arrived, and being unable at that time to set out on another journey, his lordship yielded to the prayers of the Viceroy and Governor, and deputed me to fulfil this mission of peace. Learning that I was furnished

by the Viceroy and Governor with full powers to treat of the submission of the rebels who occupied a large and very rich part of the province, the mandarins hastened to offer me their services. I thanked them all as politely as possible, but chose those who should accompany me from the persons connected with the Society of the Holy Childhood. My chief man of business was Dr. Y, brother of Lucy Y, who was beheaded for the faith at Kay-Tcheou, at the same time as M. Neel. My Secretary, Benedict-Su, is the first child I received at Kouy-Tcheou. He had begun his studies at the time he lost his father and mother, and made such rapid progress in our schools, that he became capable of filling the place of secretary to Bishop Faurie for his Chinese letters. His lordship even gave him some lessons in Latin, and as he had a Bishop for his tutor, we surnamed him *the Dauphin*. He is now a mandarin, and wears a crystal button and a peacock's feather. The name of my steward is Francis Xavier Sang. On my return, Lao-Ta-jeu gave him also a button, which his devotion to my service had well earned. My two aides-de-camp were chosen from our schools, and I prepared them for their first communion, which they made on the eve of my departure. They were the first to enter the first rebel town which submitted, and I must bear witness to their good conduct during the whole of the expedition. They deserve to bear the title of Frenchmen. It seems as if when our young French people pour their alms into the treasury of the Holy Childhood they poured at the same time into the hearts of their Chinese brethren, a large dose of that noble devotion, that ardent charity with which their own overflows.

The name of one of my aides-de-camp is Matthias Yu, and that of the other Louis Han. In recompense for their services, they have received from Lao-Ta-jeu a button with the peacock's feather, like that formerly bestowed upon Paul Yang. Matthias Yu has entered the service of the viceroy, and Louis Han, to whom I had given some Latin lessons during the campaign, has quitted the insignia of a mandarin to enter the seminary, where we hope he will make rapid progress. This lad belongs to a military family as does also his aunt, who was received some time ago by the Rev. Fr. Lions. Observing an air of frankness in this little girl, which is not common in China, this missionary sent her to the capital. She learned to say the catechism in the course of a few days, and at her baptism they gave her the name of Philomena. She was soon able to be very useful to the directress of the orphanage; a neophyte herself, she instructed the other neophytes with great zeal, while teaching a class of little girls. At her own request she was admitted amongst a set of girls and postulants whom I assembled every

Thursday for private instruction. One day I said to them: "Almost all the province is in trouble; all the roads are intercepted by the rebels; seven chiefs, whose names I know, are coming to attack you in this establishment, and have vowed your destruction. If you desire to do glorious battle with them, you must be obedient to my orders, and if you second my endeavours well, I can assure you the victory." Looking at me, Philomena answered: "The father has only to command us; if he will kindly direct us we will beat all the rebels in the province." "There is no need," I replied, "to go from the house to beat the rebels of whom I am speaking; all that is needed is to keep guard here. . . . The first of these chiefs is named *Pride*, the second *Avarice*, &c." There were some smiles at Philomena's mistake, but for my part I admired her straightforwardness, her devotion and her obedience; it never entered her head that the father could command anything too difficult. Philomena has become one of the most useful persons in the house; she now manages the orphanage for our little girls. Of these we have more than 80, divided into sets of ten, each set being superintended by one of the most intelligent of our girls, with Philomena at the head of all. She manages the establishment admirably. It might be called a select battalion. Philomena rejoices that her nephew has entered the Seminary. Her only desire is that all her family should be Christians, and this favour she begs for with so much fervour that our Lord will not refuse. . . But let us return to the result of my mission extraordinary, from which this discussion has turned our attention.

I am sure you will be glad to hear that my steps have been crowned with success. Three important towns, Siou-Tchen, Kin-Y-fau, and Tche-Kin-Tcheou having made their submission. The civil and military mandarins came back to their places in these towns before my return to Kouy-Yang. The whole country is now in submission, the town of Schen-Fang-Tcheou excepted. The misconduct of a mandarin who published an edict which infringed the rights of the people, has prevented the submission of this place; yet this rebel town has consented to lay down its arms at my request, and to give a free passage to travellers through its territory. I have also received honours here which I had no right to expect in a revolted country.

The pacific mission entrusted to me has enabled me to add to the Holy Childhood as well as to its sister, the Propagation of the Faith, several large establishments, which will enable our work to take the important position it deserves, and which circumstances now favour. It would be difficult to find a more favourable opportunity for labouring efficiently at the conversion of Kouy-

Tcheou. The people of the countries I have just visited, regard me as their liberator. My progress was everywhere a triumph.— But no—I am not quite right; whilst I was rendering so great service to the empire, a mandarin of the emperor was conspiring my ruin, and he used every means for the accomplishment of his end. He sent a number of troops in pursuit of me, and wrote to the chiefs of the city guards of the countries through which I should pass. He made it the duty of all his subordinates to second his endeavours, and at last offered a reward of 300 taels to whoever should bring him my head. On learning the danger which threatened me, the people hastened in crowds to give me a protection, which sheltered me from all risk. . . . Four Christians fell victims to the ferocity of this persecutor.

The part of the province of Kouy-Tcheou to which I have just restored peace, will, I hope, produce an abundant harvest, since it has lately been watered by the blood of four generous martyrs. The persecutor received the punishment due to his crime; for hearing of the massacre of the Christians, and the danger with which I had been threatened, our viceroy, Lao-Ta-jeu, condemned our bitter enemy to death. Before, however, the sentence of death had time to reach the place where the crime had been committed, the persecutor was assassinated by some people who had had much to suffer from his exactions. Lao-Ta-jeu has ordered the erection of an expiatory church in the town of Kin-Y-hien, where the four Christians shed their blood for the faith, but as everything proceeds slowly in China, I do not know when the building will be commenced.

After a campaign of ten months duration, I am now returned to the old pretorium of Tien-Ta-jeu, and am living here in the midst of the interesting family of the Holy Childhood. The number of children has much increased during my absence; so much so that our establishments are not sufficient to contain them. It would be a good thing if we were able to repair the large building which the government has made over to us in one of the suburbs outside the southern gate. In that case we should send a great many of our elder children thither, to be employed in agriculture, and we should then easily be able to receive a larger number of children into our establishments in the town. That in the suburbs, taken from the hands of the mandarins, was given to us by the chief persons of the town, in order that children should find there the succour they had a right to demand. We have had possession of this establishment for two years, but in spite of our needs and the public opinion, which requires that this asylum should be opened, we have not hitherto had the means to do it,

Our Orphans have just lost a protector ; our viceroy, Lao-Ta-jeu has left Kouy-Tcheou by order of the emperor to go to Yun-Nan. Before leaving he desired to give us one more mark of his good will towards us. He came to pay a last visit to our orphanage of elder boys, in the pretorium of Tien-Ta-jeu. Having heard of his intention, Bishop Faurie hastened to receive a person of so much distinction. All the children came out into the large court to make the *ko-teau*, and the good viceroy returned them a friendly salute as if they had been literati. After having affectionately exhorted them to gratitude for the benefits they receive from us, he visited the school-room. He went from one end to the other, stopping from time to time to question the children, who all answered in a most satisfactory manner. Their replies both surprised and interested the viceroy and his numerous suite. The great man would also make our children write, and then taking a brush in his hand, he made a mark with red ink on the pages that were written the best. I need not say how happy our children are at having been honoured by the visit of so important a personage.

Bishop Faurie pointed out to the noble viceroy that our children were not very well dressed this year, owing to the great increase in our numbers, want, and our consequent inability to meet all our requirements. "If we have not had new dresses made for them this year," added the bishop, "it is to enable us to extend our help to a greater number of them." Our shortness of funds has obliged bishop Faurie, much against his will, to allow no more children to be received at Yan-Tu-Sang, an orphanage given to us by the government at the same time as that of which I have spoken above.

There, we only receive children under 3 years, and of these we have now 95. The people complained of the step the bishop has been obliged to take, and asked with murmurs, whether he "meant to keep his promise no better than the mandarins." Our reputation was injured by this state of things, and that of the viceroy, who took so great interest in us, suffered also. This good man on his return home sent us 4000 taels, with a message to the bishop that the sum could be repaid at Su-Tchen. So the gate of our orphanage is again open to deserted children. May the Lord reward our generous benefactor!

Pray accept, Rev. Sir, the assurance of the profound respect of your devoted servant,

Vielmon, Miss. Apost.

From the same, to the Director of the Society.

Kun-Yang-fou, April 11th, 1866.

Reverend Sir,

The Holy Childhood has just presented Kan-Yang-fou with a spectacle of a new kind. I was employed through the whole of Lent in preparing the boys of the old pretorium of Tien-Ta-jou for their first Communion, and on Easter day about 80 of them had the happiness of making it. One of our colleagues who came here some months ago, was kind enough to accede to my request that he would preside at this affecting ceremony, and he was happy to consecrate the first fruits of his apostolate to the Holy Childhood, the hope of Kouy-Teco, which will convert this beautiful province.

The children were all clothed in white, the girls of our orphanages having made all the dresses, even the shoes. After mass we took all the children to Bishop Faurie, and, as his dwelling is at the southern gate, we had to cross the whole town to get there. Our children walked in two lines, and never was so well ordered a battalion seen in China; it attracted general attention; men, women, and children came forth to observe so well behaved a procession. On the road from the northern to the southern church, about the middle of the town, we came to the You-in-Tang, where the children of 2 or 3 years or less, are taken care of. Our young communicants stopped there to make a visit to their younger brothers, and would gladly have made them partakers in their happiness.

Afer having taken a cup of tea together, we continued our journey, a crowd of pagan children always following, who, we really might have said, were envious of the happiness of our young Christians. Having reached the bishop's house, our children first made his lordship a salutation in common, and then went up to him two and two; his lordship gave them his blessing and to each a present of a medal. This was a happy day for us, as well as for these dear children.

In one of my late letters I spoke to you of a young woman named Philomena, and gave some particulars regarding her which I thought very interesting. God has granted her request; all her family have embraced the faith; her old father has given up the profession of arms that he may devote himself solely to the service of God, and as he is also a doctor he has requested to be taken

into a pharmacy. He is now in that of Yea-in-Tang, where our little children are placed, his daughter Philomena being the superior of the establishment. She manages it so well that she receives many visits from the wives of the mandarins, who come to admire the good order which prevails there.

Philomena's place in the orphanage for little girls has been supplied by a young person of rare merit, whose history is also very interesting. Baptised at the age of fourteen, Cecilia showed so good a disposition that contrary to usual custom Father Neel allowed her to make her First Communion on the same day as that of her Baptism. A few days after this Cecilia lost her father, and the chief of the village, a rich and powerful man, asked her in marriage for his son. Cecilia however declared that she had already chosen a spouse and that she would have no other—this spouse was Jesus Christ. As she was gifted with very many good qualities the request became more pressing, but the young girl continued a decided refusal. It is well known that amongst the Chinese a girl has no will of her own; her father and mother decide her fate, and after their decease the elder brother takes their place. There was therefore an endeavour to oblige Cecilia's elder brother to give her in marriage, but his reply was that with Christians girls are as free in this matter as boys are. Unable to obtain anything by gentleness, the chief of the village then had Cecilia's brother put to death as a Christian, and Cecilia fled away and came to take refuge in our orphanages. During the six years she has been here she has never deserved the slightest reproof. She is now twenty, and is quite capable of taking Philomena's place in the girls' orphanage.

The visits which the wives of the mandarins pay to our orphanages are not without fruit. Two young wives of the late sub-prefect entered our convent as postulants after his death. They observe the rule like our young Christians: they study, work, and pray in an edifying manner. You would say that they were expressly intended for community life, and as they are very intelligent and have left the world for ever, they will be of great use for our schools and the propagation of our faith.

Pray, Rev. Sir, that our Lord may bless our labours and enable us to make progress. Accept the assurance of profound respect with which I have the honour to be

Your very humble servant,
Vielmon,

Miss. Apost. at Kouy-Tcheou.

From the same to the Director of the Society.

Kouy-Yang-fou, 5 June 1866.

Rev. Sir,

I have the honour to write to you this day, to recommend to the prayers of the Society a person whose loss we most sensibly feel. Death has just taken from us Dr. Y. To appreciate this worthy doctor you must read the following note written by Bishop Faurie in his Journal of the Mission in 1862. "Y-Sien-sin is a very distinguished doctor of the metropolis. He is the elder brother of Lucy Y, who lately shared in the Rev. Fr. Neel's martyrdom, and is held in great estimation by the mandarins on account of his medical skill, which has gained him several buttons. He is also a fervent Christian.....At the present time he gives his services to the Holy Childhood in consequence of a vow which he made in the midst of a great danger which he incurred three years ago. It is to him we always have recourse to free us from petty persecutions. He has a respectable appearance, speaks very well, and is of a conciliatory disposition. He almost always succeeds."

After the expiration of his vow, Dr. Y continued to serve the Holy Childhood with a zeal which never abated. The pharmacy of which he had the care is at the door of the bishop's residence, quite close to the orphanage for little girls under seven years old. Some days before Pentecost, the doctor returned from visiting his patients more than usually fatigued, and was unable to sleep. When all were gone to rest he heard the voices of a great many children in prayer. He questioned within himself why they should be praying at that time, and above all why there were so many, for he seemed to hear the voices of thousands. To assure himself that he was not suffering from any illusion, he arose and went towards the orphanage.....The children ceased not to pray, but the nearer the doctor approached the more the voices retired from him. The next morning the doctor went to look after the orphanage and found that there also the voices of children had been heard, but in a different direction. The doctor hastened to Bishop Faurie, whom he found preparing to go to the altar, and asked him the meaning of this singular circumstance. "The many children whom you have baptised," replied the bishop, "are come to seek you and conduct you to heaven." "I am unworthy of such honour," he humbly replied. That very day he fell ill, and the malady made rapid progress. On Whitsunday he was

carried to the Church, where he said he desired to receive the bishop's last benediction, but before the end of the Mass it was necessary to carry him out to his bed. On the evening of that day I carried him the holy Viaticum, which he received kneeling on his couch, and on the following day he gently gave up his soul, crowned with merits, to his God. Dr. Y. was sixty years of age.

Every one, rich or poor, was indebted to him, and all desired to give him a last mark of gratitude. I never saw a greater display of funeral pomp. The mandarins and people equally contributed to it, and those who could not be present sent representatives with their flags and ensigns. The children of the Holy Childhood all dressed in white preceded the coffin, and Bishop Faurie escorted by three missionaries would also accompany Dr. Y. to his last abode. I must call your attention to the circumstance that amongst the alms of the mandarins there is one which proves the high opinion entertained of Dr. Y. by intelligent persons; the Viceroy Lao-Ta-jeu had taken the son of our doctor to Yun-Nan as his private secretary, and on hearing the sad news of his death, he gave 300 taels to this young man for prayers for his father. In recommending the good doctor who sent so many children to heaven to the prayers of the Society, I should feel that I failed in my duty if I did not also ask for prayers for the conversion of the good viceroy Lao, for to him in great measure is owing the wonderful progress which the Holy Childhood continues to make at Kouy-Tcheou.

The number of our children is continually increasing, we know not where to lodge them, and yet we are compelled by circumstances to go on receiving some of them. How can we refuse those offered by the mandarins? Good works are now the order of the day with them, and whenever they find deserted children in the streets, they send them to us. The following story is surprising. A Tartar mandarin met at about four days journey from the capital, two children four or five years old, who came asking alms, and telling him that their father and mother had been killed by the rebels. Tired of their cries the mandarin ordered some sapecs to be given them, and then, being softened by the history of their misfortunes, he wished to do something more to the purpose for these poor orphans. But what could he do with them? Where could he place them in a country desolated by the rebels? Suddenly the remembrance of the orphanages in the capital came into his mind. "Do you think you could follow my palanquin for four days?" he said to the children. "Yes we can," replied the orphans. They set out, and in the course of four days the good mandarin himself brought his two proteges to one of our orphanages.

Thus whilst losing their temporal goods, these children have found the salvation of their souls. What blessings there are owing to our dear children in Europe! May God reward them.

Pray accept, Rev. Sir, the assurance of the profound respect of your very humble servant,

Vielmon,
Miss. Apost.

From the same* to Monsieur Germainville, at Paris.

Kouy-yang-fau, the capital of Kouy-Tcheou,
11th June, 1866.

Very dear Mr. Germainville,

Thank you a thousand times for the deep interest you take in the mission of Kouy-Tcheou. The Annals of the Propagation of the Faith and those of the Holy Childhood inform you of our progress, and have mentioned the combats and victories of the martyrs, whose generous blood cannot fail to fertilize more and more a land so blessed by the Lord. Time is short in China, and I have not yet had enough to do much work.

After the martyrdom of the Rev. Fr. Neel, our vicar apostolic, Bishop Faurie, sent me to the capital of the empire to carry the news of this grave infraction of the treaty, to the French legation. My journey to Peking lasted more than two years, and on my return I was installed in the large pretorium of General Tien-Ta-jeu, our persecutor. After I had passed some months there I was employed upon a mission extraordinary. The Mussulmans of Kouy-Tcheou who had been for some years in a state of revolt, tendered their submission on condition that Bishop Faurie would act as mediator. The bishop deputed me to fulfil this mission. The campaign lasted nearly a year, but my measures were at last crowned with success. I have sent the particulars of this

* M. Vielmon was formerly an officer, and this circumstance explains the form and tone of his letter. He married, but becoming a widower, he resolved to consecrate himself to God. After studying for some years in the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris, he embarked for China, which during six years he evangelized with a happiness which he would gladly share with some of our brave soldiers. It is worth observing that amongst the pupils of the Seminary of Foreign Missions there are almost always some old soldiers. At the present time a former Pontifical zouave and a corporal are studying there. Honour to the brave soldiers, who after having served their apprenticeship to a life of obedience and devotion under our flag, proceed to continue it in greater beauty under the banner of the cross, causing the God of their fathers and the name of France to be blessed in countries beyond the seas.

expedition to the Foreign Missions, and I hope that these details may interest your soldiers. Oh if they might be the means of inducing some of them to quit the sword for the cross, how happy should I be! Let some old soldiers come out to us at Kouy-Tcheou; I promise them that they will be happier than with the regiment. If you can find means to send us plenty of missionaries you will provide what is wanted for converting Kouy-Tcheou.

As you read the news from Kouy-Tcheou, you will see that the Holy Childhood does wonders in this mission. But time fails me to-day, and it is as impossible as it would be agreeable, to give you details which you would read with so much interest.

I am still in the palace of General Tien-Ta-jeu, engaged in building a church. If you know any charitable persons who might be willing to contribute to this holy work, you may assure them that I should receive their offerings, be they what they may, with gratitude. I shall never fail to carry to the holy altar the remembrance of those persons who have contributed to the erecting of the house of God.

Thank you, my dear friend for your kind remembrance; Bishop Faurie and I often speak of you: on your part do not forget us before God. Above all pray for your devoted servant,

Vielmon,

Miss. Apost. in Kouy-Tcheou.

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Louis Faurie, of the Society of Foreign Missions, Vic. Apost. of Kouy-Tcheou, to Mr. Germainville at Paris.

Kouy-Tcheou, June 6th, 1866.

Very dear Friend,

I learn from your letter of the 14th August that several of mine have been lost, for I always reply punctually to every letter which I receive. If, for want of leisure, I do not always write at much length, I find at least a few moments in which to say something to my good friends.

You wish me to establish the "Society of Christian Mothers," founded by Fr. Ratisbonne in this place. God be praised, we do not need it. All our mothers are excellent Christians, and very obedient to the laws of the Church. The missionary need only speak and every one obeys. The Christians of this country count it an honour to be Christians, and take care to fulfil their duties with regularity. Though the cold and negligent are to be met

with, they never lose their faith, and the missionary has always authority to lecture them. Even the most indifferent are respectful and obedient, and on the slightest illness they desire confession. The most severe threat that can be made to a lukewarm Christian is that he shall not be confessed when he is ill. Alas! how many European Christians would be perhaps indifferent to such a menace.

Our poor province is always ravaged by *the rebels, pestilence, and famine*. These united scourges have carried off nine-tenths of our new Christians. The pagans have perished in the same proportion, so that the province is almost depopulated. If we were at peace the conversions would still be numerous. The survivors are so unfortunate in this world that they readily open their hearts to the hope of the goods of eternity. God has tilled this land so thoroughly only I hope to render it more fruitful.

Pray then earnestly to our Lord to grant us this much desired and most desirable peace, and ask the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph to join their prayers to ours.

Believe me always your faithful friend,

Louis Faurie,

Bp. of Apollonia, Vic. Apost. of Kouy-Tcheou.

From Sister Lucia Cupis, Superior of the Daughters of Charity at Hong Kong, to the Director of the Society.

(Translated from the Italian.)

Hong Kong, 24th October, 1865.

Rev. Sir,

In sending in the account of our establishment here I think that I comply with your desire and fulfil my duty in relating some circumstances in which are particularly shown forth the love of our Lord for these dear little souls, and the protection afforded them by His holy mother.

I remember having already had the pleasure of introducing their protégé Caroline to our young associates; that poor cripple who after having given abundant proofs of her piety and her talent in the occupations which belong to this country, desired to return to her native place, in order to become the devoted instructress of her companions, and to help us, as we hope, in the work of winning souls to God. In fact, we soon put her to the trial, and were not disappointed. She began her labours with the greatest zeal; but

her father, who had soothed us with fine promises, drew back when the time came for action. The horror in which all natural defects are held by this people increased his dislike for his daughter, and this avaricious man found the expense of her maintenance so heavy that he declared to the rev. father missionary that he could not continue to keep her unless some one would undertake to provide her with all she needed. This would have been but a trifle, but the poor child, incapable of moving by herself, could find no one, neither father nor mother, relative nor friend, who would carry her to church to assist at the Holy Mass. At last they thought of bringing her back to us, and she was gladly received as a dear child who had never given us any displeasure, but had on the contrary been a great comfort to us.

I think I have also made known the little Anna Ley to our young benefactors, and told them of the fervour of her first Communion and the constancy with which she endured the ill-treatment of her mother, who would not allow her to remain in our orphanage. The conversion of this mother was always the object of the greatest concern and the most fervent prayers of her good little daughter, whose heart, however joyful at having found a secure refuge in the house of the Lord, was yet torn by a cruel thorn, which caused a bitter pain. But the time fixed by the Divine compassion for granting these ardent prayers at last arrived, and as is so often the case with the favours of Heaven, it was through the sweet Mary. Amongst many other graces brought to us from her in the month of May last, we must give an account of the following: A pious lady of our acquaintance, asked if we could receive into our house a woman who was very ill, and deprived of all human aid. On my replying in the affirmative she was immediately sent, and you may suppose our surprise when we recognised in the invalid the mother of our Anna. Our heart was full of gratitude and hope, and after having placed her suitably, we called in her daughter. I cannot describe the picture formed by this meeting in such a place. Anna was incapable of expressing her feelings; overwhelmed by joy on the one side at seeing her mother amongst us, and by grief on the other at finding her almost dying, her eyes were bathed in tears, and she could only exclaim: "I thank Thee, O Lord my God, I thank Thee." Every succour which her condition required was immediately given to the invalid: alas! her soul was even more sick than her body, but whilst the latter was on the point of dissolution the former was about to gain a new life. The picture of her criminal life was placed before her; her eyes opened to divine light; she felt the enormity of her sins, and was alarmed by them; but she

took confidence, and the touching exhortations of her child completed the conquest. She asked of her own accord to see the minister of the Lord; the very same whose holy advice and paternal words she had so often turned into ridicule. She made her Confession to him, and then received the holy Eucharist in the best dispositions.

From that time the invalid appeared to progress towards a cure. Instead of rejoicing at this, she seemed to lament it, for she mistrusted herself, and feared she might return to her bad ways when again at home; she therefore begged her daughter to unite with her in praying that God would call her to Himself whilst she was in a safe asylum, and in such good dispositions. What a painful trial for the heart of a daughter! In her affectionate and pious simplicity the good Anna refused not to join with her mother in this prayer, which was so well heard, that a few days witnessed its accomplishment. Like an angel of pardon and peace, the pious child assisted in tears and yet joy, at the Christian and edifying death of her mother, finding a compensation in the heavenly mother, for her she had lost on earth.

Not satisfied with having gained this much loved soul to God, Anna had thought also of her younger brother, now an orphan. In order to give him full particulars of the health of the invalid, she had him invited here, and contrived to detain him a few days, during which we were able to get a place for him in the boys' orphanage from our Rev. Superior, Father Raimondi. The child entered unwillingly, and for a few days was very restless and undisciplined; but after the death of his mother he entirely altered, and is now active and obedient and gives us very good hopes.

Here is another instance of the fruits of the zeal of one of the good Chinese who are added to our little society. Alone in her family, the girl to whom I allude had decided to become a Christian, and from that moment the conversion of her relations became the only object of her prayers and her desires. Uniting action with wishes, she began by begging one of her sisters to confide one of her little girls to her care, and having obtained this request she brought up the child in the principles of our holy religion. Having at last acquired the confidence of her sister by means of her gentle manners, she endeavoured to revive in her heart the maternal love which had been hitherto almost stifled. By dint of the services she rendered her, she obliged her to gratitude, and the sister, unable to resist her pressing entreaties, came to us to be instructed in Catholic truth. She brought with her two other little girls, who were placed in the orphanage, and a third, who on account of her tender age was put into the asylum. This

woman did not, however, come to us very willingly, and took little interest in what she heard, till her youngest little girl died. This event, which might have been expected would render her less docile, produced on the contrary, an entire change. We have several times observed this; we have seen parents become entirely altered after the death of their children, and consider this a certain sign of the efficacious intercession of these little angels with our dear Lord. It happened within our knowledge at Hong-Kong, that three or four years after the death of some children in the asylum, their father and mother were found very ill on the public road by the missionary fathers, on which occasion they asked to be instructed and baptised by them. Father Raimondi has himself baptised several under similar circumstances. But let us return to our good Chinese. She had the comfort of seeing her two little girls received into the bosom of the holy Church, and after having had the necessary instruction she was herself baptised, and now is ardently expecting the day when she shall be admitted to the other sacraments.

It so happened, that this year, we have received several little invalids, and amongst these was one seven years old, who had escaped a great danger, and who only lived with us a week, but during this time she gave proofs of so much wisdom and an intelligence so superior to her age, that she was judged fit to receive, not only the sacrament of holy baptism, but also that of confirmation. She was surprised at the care bestowed upon her, and when asked if she would believe in our good God and serve Him: "Certainly I will," she answered, "for the Lord who teaches you to treat me so well, must indeed be good;" and when it was added that if she believed in Him and was baptised, she would go and see Him and love Him in heaven; "O yes," she said, "yes, baptise me quickly that I may get to love and possess the Lord who is so good." In such sentiments did this dear child finish her short career of life.

Another child, when dying, firmly refused to be baptised, though she acknowledged the necessity of this holy sacrament for salvation; and more than this, she conversed familiarly, in our presence, with the demon who encouraged her in her obstinacy. Every endeavour to bring her to a better mind having failed, we fervently recommended her to our Lord and begged Him to convert her; we also recommended her to Mary, and put the holy rosary round her neck. This unfortunate child was no sooner invested with this precious collar, than she became docile, asked for the regenerating waters, and her soul being purified in the sacred font, quitted this world with most edifying sentiments,

and fled to the feet of the Virgin Queen, there to remain thanking and loving her Son for all eternity. How good is the power of prayer!

Last June, we had another striking instance of the love of our most sweet Mother. In the course of four days, twenty-three of our orphans were attacked with cholera. This alarming commencement could not fail to fill us with uneasiness.....We already reckoned two victims; the little Louisa, deaf and dumb, and another who was carried off in a few hours. Many of them had received the last sacraments, and one was on the point of yielding her last sigh, when, after having so often experienced the love of the "*Refuge of Sinners*," we implored with confidence the aid of the "*Health of the Sick*." On the evening of the fourth day it occurred to us to add a few drops of the miraculous water of La Salette to the disinfecting liquid with which we constantly sprinkled the rooms of the orphanage, whilst at the same time we had the relics of the Blessed Virgin exposed in our chapel, and went thither to unite our prayers. From that time the power and love of our tender Mother was plainly manifested. The contagion ceased, there were no new cases; no fresh victims; all our invalids improved, and even those at their agony recovered their health. The charity of the English doctor Mr. William Kans was very conspicuous this time. You cannot imagine how assiduously, and with what interest he visited our little invalids four or five hours a-day, nor with what zeal he employed himself in finding means for checking an evil which was making such rapid progress. But what shall I say of the goodness and charity of our venerable superior? Forsaking his greatest duties he redoubled and prolonged his visits to the poor children, which were indeed a comfort to them; he gave abundant spiritual consolation to each and to all, speaking to them like a tender father; and not satisfied with these visits to our little invalids, he also went several times to see those who were well, fearing that at such a fatal time fear might cause them illness also. With looks more gay than usual he addressed them with words of courage and of hope, and left them comforted and joyful.

How many instances of the love and pity of our sweet Mary could I not recount. But I must end this letter already long, by some words about our little ones.....We have had an abundant harvest of dear little souls this year. 435 have entered our asylum and have been baptised. Few amongst them, it is true, have survived, but the dead are not lost. Oh no! we hope to see them again in paradise, and to unite with them in forming a crown around the loving and merciful Jesus and Mary. Some of them really seemed only to be waiting for baptism before they died; it

seemed as if their souls would not leave their feeble bodies till the gates of heaven had been opened for their admission. How admirable are the ways of Providence.

But it is time to conclude this long letter, which I do by begging you to pray earnestly to God for us and for our cherished work. At the same time accept the respectful expression of the sentiments of esteem and consideration with which I am

Your devoted servant,
L. Cupis, D. of C.

Extracts of a letter from the Rev. Father Palatre, Jesuit missionary in Kiang-Nan, to the Director of the Society.

The following lines regarding a humble brother of the Society of Jesus, whose memory will long be held in benediction in the orphanage of Zi-Ka-Wei, will not be perused without emotion. If the numerous orphans of this establishment (well known to our associates) have lost a father and a friend on earth, they have gained we may hope one more protector in heaven.

Orphanage of Zi-Ka-Wei.
8 Sept., 1866.

.....Death has just made a fresh breach in our ranks; it has carried off Brother Leopold Deleuze. He whom we have now lost was not it is true invested with the priestly character like the Rev. Father Giaquinto, but in the humbler rank in which Providence had placed him, he knew how to employ with zealous advantage the talent confided to him by God. In him the orphanage loses a clever workman, and a religious full of devotion for the work of the Holy Childhood.

Brother Deleuze was born in Belgium, the 13th July, 1818, and entered the Society of Jesus the 6th of Sept. 1839. After remaining in France for six years, during which time he made himself remarkable for his uncommon aptitude to learn the different things which are so peculiarly useful in missions, he received the welcome order for his departure for China. Some weeks later he came to Bordeaux, and on the 22nd June, he embarked on board the sailing vessel *La Méloë* with four other missionaries, for his distant home. This is not the place to speak of this voyage, one of the most unprosperous in the memory of Nankin Mission; but some acts of charity belong to it, which gratitude forbids should be concealed. When the *Méloë* entered the port of the Manilla, Brother Deleuze

had been for some time suffering from an illness which to all appearance was leading him to the tomb. The hospitality shown to him, as well as to the other missionaries by the Dominican fathers restored him to life. He could but admire their tender and delicate charity during the fortnight he passed in their convent. On the order of the Father Prior, the Brother Infirmarian attended him with the most assiduous care, and one of the best doctors in Manilla made him daily visits, so that, thanks to the children of St. Dominic, when the time came for him to embark for Macao he was in the enjoyment of perfect health.

He first set foot on the country of Kiang-Nan on the 24th May 1846. After having filled different employments at the seminary of Wang-Dong and at Zi-Ka-Wei he came to live at the Jesuits' residence at Shang-Hai. The new cathedral of St. Francis Xavier, built in the faubourg Tong-Ka-Dou of this town, and the church of St. Ignatius at Zi-Ka-Wei had been finished about four or five years, and on the principal feasts the missionaries celebrated the holy sacrifice in these places with a solemnity which recalled the memory of the old days in the native land. The music however failed, for organs were wanting. Difficulties arising which made it best to give up the idea of sending to ask for them in Europe, Brother Deleuze undertook to build them, provided that a father, conversant with the rules of music, would help him. Father Ravary gave his assistance, M. Hamel's new, complete manual for organ builders, as well as the atlas which follows it, were sent for from Europe, and the brother set to work. Bamboos of different sizes were used with great advantage, instead of metal tubes, and the success of the instrument surpassed all our hopes. The first organ was placed in the cathedral of Tong-Ka-Dou; the church of Zi-Ka-Wei and that of St. Joseph at Yang-Kin-Pong on the land ceded to France, had afterwards theirs. They were visited by a great number of strangers of distinction, and by the officers of the corps which took possession of Peking in 1860, and whilst admiring the ability of the good brother they were struck by the sweetness of the sounds which were drawn from the bamboos, which they could not have imagined would have produced such beautiful harmony.

These labours engaged almost exclusively the latter years of Brother Deleuze till his entrance into the orphanage on the 26th December 1864. He set to work at once, and took the direction of the workshops. Printers, engravers, painters, gilders, varnishers, joiners, organ builders, shoemakers, labourers, all depended on him; thanks to his uncommon activity he was equal to his position, but his strength could not long second his good will.

He had also to take charge of the linen, and to visit the sick; he was at the same time doctor and infirmarian, and in this office, which more particularly called his charity into exercise, I have often admired the delicate attentions with which his affection for the orphans inspired him. He had always some words of comfort to address to them, and after leading them to hope for a speedy recovery, should such be the will of God, would offer them oranges, or other nice things which he had bought on purpose. Poor pagan children who had come to the orphanage half naked and tortured by hunger, not having the least notion of our holy religion, could not understand how this European who had never known them could be so earnest in his endeavours to do them good,—they who had formerly passed whole days in begging for one or two cups of rice, which they could not always obtain. Their surprise was soon changed into emotion, and tears of gratitude fell from their eyes. After such a prelude it is not difficult for the missionary, aided by Divine Grace, to awaken in the hearts of these pagan children the knowledge and love of our divine Master.

These multiplied occupations were of a kind speedily to exhaust the most robust health. An unexpected occurrence served to increase the fatigues of Brother Deleuze. At the end of January I was attacked by a complaint in the eyes which obliged me to leave the orphanage, and for more than three months it was impossible for me to return. Fr. Chevreuil being detained by his occupations at the residence at Zi-Ka-Wei, could come but for short visits to the orphanage, and thus the sole care of the house rested with the good brother. Yet he met every need without any relaxation, the love of our Lord and desire for the salvation of souls sustained his courage, and not a word of complaint ever came from his lips. When after a day of fatigue he returned to his room to take his evening meal appetite failed, and he often retired to rest without having even tasted the food which had been served; yet on the next day he would go through the same fatigues determined that no one should share them with him. I could not resume my duties till the 16th of May; it was too late. "Brother Deleuze is tired to death," said the child who prepared his repasts; "he never eats, and in spite of that he goes on working as usual." In fact death delayed not his stroke; he was attacked with typhus fever. In two days the malady had made alarming progress. The brother infirmarian declared that it was important that he should be taken from the orphanage and removed to the residence, where, far from work and preoccupation, he might enjoy the quiet which might perhaps restore him

to health. We told him that if he wished to regain his strength it was indispensable that we should remove him from the orphanage for a few weeks. "Oh no!" said he, "I can very well stay here; it is true I am rather tired, but in a few days all will be over." We expected this reply, for we knew his dislike to making the shortest absence; he was above all things the man for duty. "We must remain at our post," he would sometimes say, in a tone which belonged to the energy of his character, "when the superiors speak, we must like soldiers remain at our post whatever it may cost our nature; I know no other way." We renewed our entreaties, he understood their meaning; "Perhaps the superiors desire that I should remove to the house at Zi-Ka-Wei? If this is the case, the thing is clear, I am ready to go."

On Sunday, May 21st, he left the orphanage never to return. On Tuesday he received holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, answering piously to all the prayers of the Church, and on Wednesday about half past four in the morning, he slept peacefully in the Lord after nineteen years spent in the mission; having arrived in China May 24th, 1846. He died May 24th, 1865.

Pray accept, Rev. Sir, &c.,

G. Palatre,
Miss. of the Society of Jesus at Kiang-Nan.

TONG-KING.

From Bishop Hilarius Alcazar, Vic. Apost. of Eastern Tong-King,
to the President of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

[(Translated from the Latin.)]

Ke-de, June 18th, 1866.

My lord Bishop,

I have received with pleasure your letter of the 16th June, 1865; permit me to offer both to you and the whole Society the heartfelt expression of my deep gratitude, not only for the grant voted by the Central Council in favour of this vicariat, but for the extreme kindness of your letter which I have done nothing to deserve. You will receive herewith a report of the vicariat, in reply to the admirable questions proposed by the Central Council, and from this, and the remarks I am now about to make, you will be enabled, with the other associates of the Society, to see clearly

how abundant are the fruits produced by your grants to this mission.

In a letter of last year I told you of the terrible famine from which the unfortunate Annamites were suffering. That was but the beginning of sorrow; from that time the scarcity continued to increase. The poor flocked to us in troops; some of them were literally skeletons, and I have myself seen many whose bones might every one be counted. Herbs, roots of trees, even the refuse which might be thrown to the pigs, were eagerly sought by these unfortunate people as a means of prolonging their miserable life for a few days. Many were seen in the streets, the markets, and elsewhere, who, pressed by hunger, seized forcibly everything which could serve for food, and at once devoured it, bearing with patience the abuse, and even the blows of those whom they had despoiled. Those who were carrying rice, money, or articles of any value, from place to place, ran great risk of losing them, these starving people robbing travellers even of their clothing.... Yet if it be taken into consideration that these were heathens suffering for many months from a most frightful famine, there is perhaps cause to praise both their moderation and their subordination. Hunger has had innumerable victims even amongst the agricultural proprietors, for there were few if any purchasers for their produce. Oh what mournful days! nothing was talked of, nothing was thought of, but this horrible famine. Within the memory of man, nothing had been seen to equal it, not only in intensity, but also in duration. It prevailed in this kingdom for about eight months, and for about three with the greatest rigour. The history of every country teaches us, that epidemic diseases invariably succeed to a severe famine, and thus it has been here; fevers, dysentery and cholera followed the famine and made a harvest of the people, already sinking under their privations.

I have said above that the people flocked to us from all sides. Distributions were made near the church, every day after Mass. I appointed a catechist who with the help of some of the faithful of the town, had the charge of distributing alms to every one, men, women, old people, and children, with the greatest possible order. Regard was had to the greater needs of some of these; to women who were nursing their children a greater quantity was given, and in consequence of this many women who had not really young infants borrowed them from their mothers that they might receive a larger share. I opened two temporary hospitals in our residence in which we received the sick, of whom our catechists had the care. When the famine was at its height in this kingdom the number of poor who received daily distributions in our residence

amounted to about three thousand. More than two thousand of our neophytes have been carried off by famine or pestilence, and there cannot have been fewer than three thousand victims amongst the Christians. As these two scourges have made no less ravage amongst the pagans we may conjecture that the number of victims for the whole kingdom cannot have been far from two and a half millions.

The Holy Childhood has reason to rejoice, not certainly in the loss of so many unfortunate adults, but on account of the glorious choir of little ones, who have been sent to heaven in consequence of this famine. In fact, observing the state of desolation around, I immediately advertised all our missionaries to urge the Christians more strongly than ever to leave all other cares, and employ themselves in traversing the suburbs, public places, and markets of the towns, and employ themselves solely in searching for the infants of pagans and baptising the dying ones. I engaged both priests and people by frequent exhortations to take piously in hand the interests of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Our Christians joyfully took our advice and went about the country in search of pagan children, baptising those whom they saw to be in danger of death and with the consent of the parents bringing the others to us. Foreseeing what would occur, I appointed five places in which the missionaries could open hospitals in houses hired for this purpose, besides the two of which I have already spoken. Pressed by hunger the pagans gave up their children to us for some small alms, as their only chance for life, and so in the course of three months I assembled in our seven hospitals more than two thousand children, most of whom are now with the angels in the enjoyment of the sight of God. At this time my coadjutor and myself, as well as my priests, were engaged at all hours of the day in baptising and confirming these children, many of whom were suffering from serious illness. During the year 1865, 36,942 children were baptised of whom only 904 survived, and of these a very small number are now living.

One day a catechist came to tell me that a Christian woman had just brought a little girl five or six years old, belonging to pagan parents. I called this woman, who told me that as she walked by the side of a stream, she saw a pagan woman, the mother of this child, whom she was on the point of throwing into the water, but that moved by compassion she had obtained the child from its mother, and had brought her to us. I then asked the child many questions, to which she made no reply, for as we afterwards found she was dumb. The poor child was baptised and confirmed, and is now in one of our hospitals. These are evident cases of providen-

tial interference in favour of the children of pagans—there are innumerable instances.

Pray accept, &c.

F. Hilarius Alcazar, Bp. of Paphos,
Vic. Apost. of Eastern Tong-King.

From the same to the Director of the Society.

After expressing his gratitude to the Central Council for their grant in favour of his vicariat of Eastern Tong-King, the venerable missionary bishop thus continues :

Village of Ke-la, June 17, 1866.

.....I have often felt that the Society of the Holy Childhood is especially useful in propagating the Gospel, and that, not on one side and in one manner only, for whenever our neophytes search the houses of pagans for their sick children, in order to baptise them they scatter the seeds of the faith among the adults they find there. Now we see every day that this seed, with the help of God brings forth its fruit in good time. We touch it as it were with our hands. Indeed it often happens that pagans come to be received amongst our catechumens, and upon enquiry it is evident that their conversion owes its first origin to the charitable zeal of our baptisers. It is not unusual to meet with pagans who arrive at the faith after one or two of their children have been baptised and have departed to the enjoyment of celestial glory. It can therefore hardly be a hasty judgment to attribute the conversion of the parent to the prayers of their little ones in heaven. I will give you an example of this, in a family who were already prepared to receive baptism and who were constant to the faith for which its head had already been deprived of his worldly goods. As soon as this good man had shown his firm resolution to embrace the Christian religion his neighbours and the chief pagans in the place made every endeavour in their power to shake his constancy. They began with pursuing this family with outrageous words, but these availing nothing, they proceeded to acts. At this time there were many of the prefects who, seeing with regret that the feeling of the court towards the Christians had become much more favourable in consequence of the peace concluded with the Europeans, so far excited the hatred of the pagans as to induce them to resist the royal will, and to persecute the Christians. They were especially watchful that no pagan should embrace the Christian Faith, and for this end they held frequent assemblies

where in the midst of orgies and good cheer they decreed punishments against those who should even receive our catechists; thus frightening by their threats all those who showed any inclination for the Christian religion. These enemies of Christ had decreed that if anyone passed over to the Christians, he should be despoiled of all his goods and driven from his village, and they threatened parents to deprive them of all their honours, if they did not strengthen their children in their paganism. All this frightened many, and no Pagan dared any longer to associate with us..... When this tempest arose, many of those who had come to catechism and were thinking of embracing our religion, instead of any longer visiting the Christians, avoided them, and would not suffer them even to enter their houses. The enemy of the human race, desired by this sort of persecution to check the progress of the faith, and God permitting, he in great measure attained his end.

But the family of whom we have spoken above, firm in their resolve to lose everything, were ready to quit all, even their own hearth, in the fulfilment of duty. For ourselves, dreading the ruin of so many persons, we advised the head of this family to go before the supreme mandarins of the province. This principal criminal prefect punished some of the persecuting pagans, and this family is able to remain in its own country. We have a well grounded hope of seeing many other inhabitants of this village embrace the Christian religion. But let us come to the principal fact. In the house of which I speak there were eight children, six of whom died young after having been washed in the waters of Baptism. God spared two, a boy and a girl, to these excellent parents, who had been baptised when dangerously ill in their infancy. Our neophytes often celebrate the obsequies of the baptised children of pagans with great pomp; they invite the parents and make a feast, from whence it follows that many of these pagans conceive a love for our holy religion.....and thus is confirmed the assertion I have made, that the Holy Childhood is a great help in preaching the Gospel.

The number of baptisms will increase this year, not only because the maladies of children are more frequent, but also by the increase in the number of those who being reduced to great poverty, more readily lend an ear to the exhortations of the missionaries and employ themselves in the search for sick children. In consequence of this our expenses also increase, not only in supplying medicines but in defraying the travelling expenses of those who devote themselves to this holy task.....I should like this year to lay the foundations of two large orphanages, for which I have already purchased the ground.

Earnestly recommending myself and all this part of the flock of Jesus Christ to your prayers and those of all the members of the Holy Childhood, I am with the greatest respect,

Rev. Sir,

**Your very humble brother and servant in Jesus Christ,
Fr. Hilarius Alcazar, of the Order of Preachers,
Bp. of Paphos, and Vic. Apost. of Eastern Tong King.**

From the Rt. Rev. Dr. Barnabas Garcia Cezon, Bp. of Biblos, Vic. Apost. of Central Tong King, to the President and Members of the Central Council of the Society.

(From the Spanish.)

After expressing his gratitude to the Central Council for their grant in favour of his vicariat, Bishop Garcia Cezon speaks of the zeal of the religious women of the third order and of the Christian neophytes, in the baptism and purchase of little pagans; 3,524 were, he says, baptized in the year which has just passed. After this the venerable missionary bishop thus continues :

13 July and 20 September, 1865.

.....May God grant a continuance of this fervour and this ardent charity in the hearts of the sisters of the Third Order and our Christian neophytes!.....But now let me say a few words on the state of religion at the present time, and on the last endeavours of the evil one for the destruction, if possible, of all Christianity in this vicariat.

Finding that the blood shed in Tong King had had no other effect than to fill heaven with illustrious martyrs, and earth with valiant confessors of the faith, the evil spirit took possession of some under-graduates who had come to Nan-Dinh, and induced them to refuse to submit to their examinations if the grand mandarins would not first permit them to make an end of the Christians. It was not God's will that the mandarins should agree to this horrible request—had it not been so all would have been over with us. Such was the disposition of the pagan population, that in a few days we should have disappeared from Tong-King, the victims of the violence and barbarity of a people who had plotted in secret to give a death-blow to the religion of Jesus Christ.

Inspired by Satan, the said graduates in Nan-Dinh, the town of martyrs, demanded not only the extermination of all that bore the Christian name, but they endeavoured to depose a grand

mandarin, because he had obeyed the king when ordered to go as ambassador to Europe. They spoke loud words of insubordination and contempt against King Tu-Duc himself.....The head of this conspiracy against Christianity and the king, was the famous mandarin Nguyen-Dinh-Tan, that Nero who during the course of the last few years has covered this Vicariat with mourning, and filled it with tears and blood. This wrong-headed man desired to take the crown from Tu Duc on account of his treaties with the Europeans, and then to attack Christianity, always the object of his fury. But our Lord did not permit His servants to fall a second time under the yoke of this ferocious mandarin. On the contrary, the conspiracy was discovered, the principal instigators were taken, and some of them, as we are told, suffered capital punishment. After this discovery the graduates of Nan Dinh again demanded their examinations with the exception of about three hundred, who returned to their homes; the pagans kept silence, and all remained calm. Thanks be to the God of the Christians who sees the machinations hidden in the depths of the heart! Without a special Providence over us it would not be possible for us to live in the midst of so many enemies. Such was the last attempt of the devil against Christianity in this kingdom, and certainly it was not ill concocted.

After this event, the King Tu-Duc published a decree in which he expressed himself in very decided terms in favour of Christianity. Our neophytes then thought peace had dawned upon them, and that the time had come for building a church, in which they could unite to offer to God the worship which is His due, and which for more than seven years had been as it were extinguished in this country. Relying then upon the words of the king, and disregarding the malice of the mandarins, they began to build their churches, but as the king had said nothing very definite in his decree, (though as was known later his intention was favourable) the mandarins gave immediate orders to throw them down, and to burn some secretly. Our poor Christians remained therefore as despairing as before; yet all was not lost, for though the mandarins caused the churches to be pulled down, they at least ceased to torment the Christians as they had in former years. It was plain that the interpretation given by the mandarins to the royal decree was according to their own wishes. We therefore hoped that the king would turn in our favour, and that then we should make another step towards the peace so greatly desired.

In fact, a short time afterwards the king published a new decree, by which he authorised all the Spanish missionaries to preach the

gospel in all his kingdom, provided they obtained a letter of safety from the immediate mandarin, after informing him of the number of missionaries, and their place and house of residence. But under the apprehension that this might be a stratagem to get us under their power, perhaps to molest us, and get possession of us whenever they should please, we thought it best to remain in our retreats, just as if this liberty had not been granted us. Our time was not yet come, all these concessions were but the dawn of the day which was rapidly approaching.

We were in this condition when our Lord cast His gracious eyes upon this Vicariat, widowed of its pastor in consequence of the glorious martyrdom of three successive Vicars Apostolic. Our heavenly Father, full of love seemed to will the termination of the persecution and the restoration of peace to our poor Christians. To complete our joy our holy father Pope Pius IX., requested the bishop of Paphos, the Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Tong-King, to come to our Vicariat, and chose from amongst us him whom in the sight of God he believed to be most worthy of being the pastor of the flock.

After imploring light from above, his choice fell on me, the most unworthy and the most useless of my brethren, though my election was not the less a cause of great joy to all the Vicariat. I had hardly been consecrated, when, as I have said, God being willing to give us peace, permitted the king to publish another decree annulling all the preceding ones, and commanding the observation of the first treaty which had been concluded with the representatives of France and Spain at Saigon. In consequence of a decree so favourable to Christianity, and which allowed us to build churches and houses for the missionaries, our neophytes recommenced their labours, and now, by the mercy of God, it would be difficult to find one single Christian village, however poor, which has not its little church, where they assemble to hear mass, to recite the rosary of the Queen of Martyrs, and to fulfil the other obligations imposed by our holy religion. We European missionaries have also our dwellings, some formed of bamboo and mud, others of reeds and wood. We have also two colleges, one for elementary education, with eighteen pupils, the other for Latin, with twenty-four. There is besides these a house for boys, from ten to fourteen who are perfecting themselves in the study of Chinese characters till they attain a suitable age for entering the Latin college. Through the mercy of God, no one now seeks to quarrel with us, still we take care not to make more noise than is necessary in order to avoid any difficulties or embarrassments which might arise on the part of the Pagans.

We can now see clearly how very injurious the persecution has been to our poor Christians. They are all reduced to a state of the greatest want. It is really quite heartrending to see it. Besides the losses which have resulted from the persecution, the rice harvest has failed this year, and we are suffering from a frightful famine, as well as from the inroads of cholera. Is not this the two-edged sword which has for more than two years made such havoc in this country, the great punishment from the Most-High, for the crimes committed in this country during these last few years? It is a remarkable fact, that some of the most violent of the persecutors of the Christians have been suddenly struck with death. The blood of so many martyrs has not yet sufficed to disarm the irritated hand of the all-powerful God.....May He have mercy on us, and may His divine justice be at last satisfied.

A few days ago I was distressed in thinking of the danger of perversion which was incurred by the children of Christian parents, who, during the persecution, had taken refuge in the houses of pagans to escape starvation; I wrote, therefore, a circular requiring all the missionaries to repurchase as soon as possible, all within their reach, and to send them to one of the two houses prepared for them, where they may learn the duties of a Christian, and forget the bad examples they had amongst the pagans. Great was our harvest of children. The news was no sooner made known than one of our two houses, and they are pretty large ones, was filled in the course of a few days.

My Lord Bishop and gentlemen, I beg of you not to forget in your prayers, this vine of the householder which has been so ill-treated, and subjected to so much suffering.

Pray accept, &c ,

Brother Barnabas Garcia Cezon,

Of the Order of St. Dominic,

Bp. of Biblas, Vic. Apost. of Central Tong-King.

From the same to the President of the Society.

(From the Spanish.)

Presidency of Bai-Chu, 19th Oct. 1866.

My Lord Bishop,

Famine and pestilence, of which I told you a little in my last letter, have broken out in a frightful manner in every quarter of this vicariat. I am obliged to exhaust every resource to save at least a few of my sheep from dying of hunger; but the famine is universal. After having emptied my stores I remain in the deepest

misery, and our poor Christians die by thousands. The decrease of Christians in the vicariat this year will be much greater than that caused by the persecution of the few last years. The pagans die in yet larger numbers; in their distress they separate from their children, and sell them to the missionaries, the sisters, and to those charitable Christians who seek them. I have just opened a large hospital of the Holy Childhood which contains five hundred infants with their nurses; I also keep more than one hundred other children in my own house. These learn prayers and Christian doctrine, whilst others learn the Chinese letters of the country. There is a house in the town confided to the care of the Sisters, which is also filled with children, containing one hundred more, with a corresponding number of nurses. An immense number of infants are sent to this house of mercy through the zeal of the missionaries, the sisters and the Christians. As they are very delicate when they arrive, very few survive. Not a night passes in which thirty or forty do not die, and the evil one has therefore circulated the calumny, that we purchase these children from the pagans to keep them in prison till they die. I have been obliged to order that they shall be buried during the night to prevent their being seen by the pagans. I do all in my power to feed them well and keep them from dying, but our dear Lord has, it seems, ordained otherwise.

Our many nurses are not sufficient, I have therefore purchased some milch cows, which came in aid. In spite of this the poor little ones die by hundreds, both as well in my house, and in those we have in the town of Bai, in Ngan-Duang, and at Casaa. These three houses are built on the same plan as my residence.

Great, therefore, has been the harvest of the Holy Childhood in Tong-King this year. But judge of the expense caused by the purchase of so many babies and their maintenance. All our Christians feel for me, and say, that this year I shall be really poor. It is necessary to have seen this misery fully to understand it, and to believe what the missionaries have to endure in Tong-King. When I was missionary on the Philippine Islands, where money is plentiful, although I felt a vocation for missionary work, I agreed with those who say, that there is no doubt that missionaries exaggerate; but now I see with my own eyes that all they say does not yet approach to the reality.

That God may preserve your lordship and the other members of the Society of the Holy Childhood, is the desire of your humble servant in Jesus and Mary,

B. C. Cezan,

Bp. of Biblas, Vic. apost. of Central Tong-King.

AMERICA.

From the Right Rev. Dr. Alex. Taché, Bp. of St. Boniface,
(Hudson's Bay,) to the Director of the Society.

Red-river, 22 Nov. 1865.

Reverend Sir,

On my return from an excursion of two months into the interior of my diocese, I hasten to send the information you require, and to add some details which may be interesting to the readers of the pious *Annals of the Holy Childhood*. For the present I shall confine myself to the account of one of the expeditions of our zealous missionaries. If your good little associates wish to follow him, tell them to provide themselves with mose cases, mittens, and all the necessaries for a cold country, and then as these good children might lose themselves in this immense ocean of snow they must permit me to accompany them as guide. Let us set out my little friends; but first we must go to the missionary, Father Lacombe. He lives out there, far to the N. W. of St. Boniface, and pretty near to the great chain which is named by geographers the Rocky mountains, and which guards the inhabitants of the shores of the Pacific ocean, from the rigour of our terrible climate. There, in the vast plains, which are spread at the feet of these high mountains, live numerous savage tribes, some of which belong to my diocese, and are known by the name of Blackfeet, which tribe in fact contains four different sets of people classed under that name.

For many years these unhappy Indians have had the sad reputation of being the wildest and cruellest of all our savages. What scenes of blood and terror have marked their ferocious intercourse with their neighbours and with themselves! Still for some springs past, the sight of our good missionaries from lake St. Anne, though only transitory, had made a salutary impression on these barbarian hearts, and they had even then asked that the "man of prayer," "the black gown," would come amongst them. Last winter, the hand of God was heavy upon these wretched children of the desert; a malignant epidemic made sad havoc amongst them under their tents of skins. Adversity is often a salutary instructor. May you, dear associates of the Holy Childhood, profit so well by the religious instructions which are lavished upon you, that you may not deserve the sad teachings of misfortune. The Blackfeet tried and overwhelmed by this malady, remembered him, who, useful everywhere, is especially so by the pillow of the sick and the couch of the dying. They sent a deputation to the priest to inform him of their sad state, and implore him to have com-

passion on their distress. On learning this news, Father Lacombe hesitated not a moment; he immediately set out on his journey. Let us follow him, dear children, let us not lose sight of him. We run some risk of not reaching him, for it is cold, the wind blows, the snow is ready to rise in thick whirlwinds, and in these immense plains, which are like a frozen sea, it is not easy to recognize one's friends. It even becomes impossible to guide oneself in the midst of the storm.

What means this frightful noise? Have all the dogs in the world assembled to receive us?.....It is a camp—a camp of savages. We are in the midst of the tribe of Criers. Do not be afraid; several hundreds of them are already Christians. See with what eagerness, with what affection they receive the missionary. They are just now overflowing with abundance, and innumerable herds of buffaloes are at their doors. Though he had need of repose F. Lacombe, immediately on his arrival, spent a part of the night in instructing his neophytes. He then had to answer questions without end about this unexpected journey. He had hardly mentioned that he was going amongst the Blackfeet, than alarm at the danger he was incurring was excited in those by whom he is surrounded. Those Blackfeet were so perfidious! They were so cruel under ordinary circumstances, what will they be under the excitement of despair? Instead of listening to the priest they would probably put him to death.....They had asked for him.....that was merely a trick.....Some of their diviners or jugglers had perhaps said that a similar victim was required to appease the wrath of their angry divinities. There was something plausible in their reasons, in the sight of human wisdom, but the holy father of the cross knows not these excuses. The missionary had no guide. He begged the archangel Raphael to conduct him; he set out alone, with only his faithful companion, that good Alexis who has been for twelve years attached to the mission. He also was without fear, and had one only desire, that of helping the missionary in the salvation of souls.

I said that the missionary would set out alone. I was wrong, you will accompany him, my children. Your little hands will daily be lifted to heaven, and your innocent and ardent hearts will be continually imploring God for the conversion of all pagan children. You then are always of the party when the missionary goes in pursuit of these little helpless creatures. The burning sands of the east have often felt your footsteps, when you were in this manner running in pursuit of the little Indian or Chinese. Let the icy plains of our Northern America also show that the associates of the Holy Childhood are ploughing there to help forward the salva-

tion of our poor little savages. Now children, come and share the merits of the missionaries. Let us set out. For several days we must traverse plains, where not the smallest shrub is to be seen, and where the cold freezes your feeble limbs. A little further, on the banks of the beautiful river, De la Biche, there is a little wood. We will light a fire here; the savages cannot be far off. Let us climb this hill, and we shall see columns of smoke, rising to heaven. We must make haste, the distance is greater than it appears, and there is suffering there. We approach the camp.....How silent and sad everything is! Are the savages not meditating some mischief? Fear not little friends; these savages are barbarians, but God has afflicted them; their hearts are troubled, sorrow tortures their souls; their untamed character struggles between despair and the rays of light darted by our Lord into the midst of the thick darkness in which they are yet buried. These are our Blackfeet.....But I hear a piercing cry passing from tent to tent... ..Is not this a signal to provoke to anger and exoite to vengeance? No, no. Do not fear. They have seen you come, and they are telling that the missionary is with you, and that you are the associates of the Holy Childhood, desiring to do good to their children.....Let us enter the camp.....What a scene! What distress! These unfortunate savages are the victims of a malady for which they know no remedy, and to which it is impossible for them to afford the least relief. The chase, their only resource, has become impossible by reason of their sickness, so that the horrors of hunger are added to the sufferings of disease.....They die in great numbers, and despair poisons the last moments of their lives. The arrival of the priest is a great cause of joy, an unspeakable happiness. Their rude natures can understand that it is the hand of God that strikes them, and that the minister is the consoling angel, who alone can feel compassion for misfortune—for the unfortunate. Abandoned by all, these poor Indians know well that he who comes from so far to visit them at the risk of his own life, that he who shows them heaven opened, and shuts under their feet the eternal abyss in which without his help they would surely be buried, can be no other than the envoy of the divine Friend of men. During the few days passed amongst these unfortunate sons of the desert, the missionary had the satisfaction to baptise more than three hundred children, and about sixty adults. This glorious success amply repaid him for all his fatigues and the distress caused by the sight of so many evils. Twelve hundred dead were lying there unburied, to be at last devoured by wild beasts. Poor mothers, themselves expiring, dragged themselves through the snow to approach the man of God, and procure the happiness of baptism for their dying children. One

of these babies died in its mother's arms, even before being baptised, at the very moment when this unfortunate woman fell at the missionary's feet. Engaged in baptising so many others he learned only too late, the unhappy fate of this child.

God rewarded the faith of these poor savages. Shortly after the arrival of the missionary the sickness sensibly diminished, and thus our holy religion obtained the double triumph of opening heaven, and appeasing the anger of God.

My good children, members of this sublime association whose object is the salvation of little pagans, you to whom God has given so many gifts and so many graces, help forward this triumph of faith, and rejoice in it as in some measure your own work. Behold the effects of our visit; more than three hundred little beings, humanly speaking most miserable, regenerated in the saving waters of baptism. Most of them are already in heaven, shining with glory, and full of gratitude towards you; a few remain upon earth. Oh! surely you will not refuse to help us, so that the holy religion which came and adopted these children when on the threshold of eternity, shall not forsake them through the time still granted to them. You will redouble your zeal, you will increase your pious and holy industry to swell the funds of the association, so that all the children of the heathen may have, with you and by your means, the happiness of becoming also the children of God and of the Church.

Oh, Rev. Sir, what good there is to be done everywhere; how many poor children to baptise and to bring up.

Accept the expression of my sincere gratitude for the generous gifts of the Association which you direct with so much zeal and success, and permit me to beg you to offer the same to all the members of the council.

Accept also the tribute of high consideration with which I have the honour to be,

Your humble and obedient servant,

✠ Alex. Bp. of St. Boniface.

POLYNESIA.—SANDWICH ISLANDS.

From the Right Rev. Dr. Louis Maigret, Vic. Apost. Sandwich Islands, to the little Associates of the Holy Childhood.

Honolulu, 18 Aug. 1865.

My good little friends of the Holy Childhood,

I remember that in a letter which I wrote to you last year, I spoke of what I had seen in a journey in one of our islands. I am now going to tell you of what has happened to one of our little associates, who is I believe hardly three years old.

One day after I had said Mass and was making my thanksgiving from my Prie Dieu I observed a very little girl who had been led by her father to the altar of our Blessed Lady. This child was radiant with innocent grace and had round her neck a pretty little medal of the Immaculate Conception. The father seemed full of emotion, and I asked myself what it could mean. I knew not; but I read in his countenance: Faith in God—confidence in Mary—Gratitude. After having made the child make the sign of the cross he pointed with his finger to the statue of the Blessed Virgin. “See, my child,” he appeared to say, “that is the image of the Mother of our Saviour; it is she who has watched over you; it is through her intercession that you will grow in age and in goodness; it is by her prayers and the grace of her Divine Son that you will keep yourself pure and will become by your virtues the joy and comfort of your family.” He appeared so sincere that I felt sure he must have had a good mother to teach him to know God and to love Mary, and I blessed them both in my heart.

But I did not know that a miracle had just taken place. The same day the father came to see me, anxious to share his feelings with me. “This morning,” he said, “I got into a carriage to go into the town; I took my little girl with me, and at the moment that the carriage began to move, the child slipped from my arms, fell to the ground, and one of the wheels passed over the middle of her body. I believed her to be killed; but, ah miracle! on lifting her up I found, not only that she was living, but that not the least bruise or injury was perceptible. Have I not cause for gratitude? Quite transported I took her again into the carriage, and my first care was to take her to the church to thank our dear Lord for her miraculous preservation, and to ask the Blessed Virgin to join her prayers with ours in thanksgiving.” “I saw you,” I said, “and I almost understood you. You have edified me much, and I thank you for the pleasure you have given me.”

So you see, children, what an advantage it is to love and serve our dear Lord. Attend then to your mothers when they teach you to do so, and to have recourse to the protection of His blessed Mother: love her also, and she will help you in time of need. Ask her to intercede in heaven to her divine Son, for the old bishop who writes to you, and who blesses you in his heart, and loves to call himself

Your devoted in Jesus and Mary,

✠ Louis,

Bp. Arathia, Vic. Apost. Sandwich Islands.

ANNALS
OF THE
Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 78.—JULY, 1867.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

From the Reverend Mr. Vielmon, of the Society of Foreign Missions, missionary in Kouy-tcheou, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

The letters of Mr. Vielmon, published in the last number of the Annals, have shown in what honour the orphanages and other establishments of the Holy Childhood are held in the province of Kouy-tcheou. In the present letter, which is a continuation and completion of the preceding, our associates will read with sentiments of satisfaction, an imperial decree, and other official documents, which ought to produce a very salutary effect. They will listen with pleasure to the voice of a missionary who declares that "*they* have a right to be proud for such a state of things."

These fortunate circumstances open, in fact, the perspective of a happy future for this part of China, and indeed for the whole country.

Kouy-yau-fau, August 18th, 1866.

Reverend Sir,

I am happy to have the honour of announcing some very good news. God has plainly merciful designs upon Kouy-tcheou. This province will be regenerated by means of the Holy Childhood.

An edict of the imperial court of Peking, has just fixed the attention of China upon our poor, but much cherished mission. Here is a translation of this edict, and of two other official documents belonging to it. Extract from the Peking Journal, of the

13th and 14th of the 2nd moon, (29th and 30th March, 1866. Thursday in holy week and Good Friday.)

The two queen mothers, regents of the Empire, have made the following decree.

"Our secretary, Lin-che, has respectfully informed us that the custom which prevailed amongst our people of drowning their little girls is not yet entirely extirpated, and he begs that we will denounce it severely. In the time of the Emperor Kien-lang, a law was promulgated in the hope of putting an end to this bad custom, which condemned those who drowned their little girls to the same punishment as those who destroyed their male descendants, which was seventy strokes with a rod, or a year and-a-half of imprisonment. Our said secretary tells us that this crime is still perpetrated in the provinces of Canton, Fokien, Tchi-Kiang, Chan-si, &c., and that it is difficult to suppose that it is not also committed in the other provinces of the Empire. It is a crime which disturbs the peace of heaven and of earth, and if we do not punish it severely, how can we save our people and escape blame?

"Therefore, we desire all viceroys and governors to command the mandarins of their province to make edicts prohibiting this cruel custom.

"Let the prefects and sub-prefects of every town invite the chief persons, and specially those that are rich, to contribute to the erection of numerous orphanages, for the reception of deserted children, so that the poor shall no longer be able to plead their poverty as a justification of the abominable crime of the destruction of the children of whose existence they have been the cause.

"If any are found, who in spite of our orders, continue this practice, let them be punished according to the full rigour of the above law; let no indulgence be shown them."

"Respect this."

Extract from the despatch of the viceroy Lao, addressed to their imperial majesties.

"The Bishop of Kouy-tcheou has saved many unfortunate emigrants, but above all he has received an incalculable number of deserted children. We believe we have rightly interpreted the intentions of your majesties, in confiding our orphans to his care. He has established things on their former footing, and everything is in good order. The children are numerous and well taken care of."

Despatch extraordinary received at Kopy-tcheou, on the 5th August, 1866.

Address of the minister charged to watch over the execution of the preceding imperial edict.

“To the two regents of the empire.

“I have just made a tour through the provinces of Chan-tong and Tche-ly on my return to Peking. On the road I saw a great number of poor, and of emigrants. They left their children on the way, weeping at being thus deserted. It was a sad sight. Your imperial highnesses have already several times given orders that orphanages shall be established in all your provinces for the reception of these children, but no account has been made of your august orders. Lao-tsong-kouan, viceroy of Yun-nan and Kouy-tcheou, is the only one who tell us that, in the metropolis of Kouy-tcheou, the orphanages are numerous and well kept, and that many children are received there. We beg your imperial highnesses to order that this good example may be followed in the other provinces.”

There is no need to tell you, Rev. Sir, how proud the mandarins and notables of Kouy-yang are of having deserved the eulogiums of the emperor, and they are particularly pleased at this poor province of Kouy-tcheou being proposed as a model to all the empire.

But to go no further, I will here observe, that it is the children of Europe who have a right to be proud of such a state of things. They it is, who by their zeal, their devotion, and their charity, have drawn the attention of the court of Peking, and deserve the praise addressed to the mission of Kouy-tcheou. They deserve a reward of a much higher kind; I mean the blessings which God will assuredly bestow upon them.

If I might be allowed to exhort our young associates of the Holy Childhood, to show themselves still more zealous, I should say:—

Ah my dear friends, if you could know all the good which is to be done here, and which we are unable to effect for want of funds, your zeal, however great it may be, would become still greater in your desire to give efficient help to so many other poor children who still are lingering in misery.

The ravages of pestilence during the past year, have considerably depopulated the province. In addition to the dearness of provisions, their scarcity was so great that even the necessaries of life were not to be had. Our children, but slightly clothed, were threatened with passing the winter without fires; for not only was coal dear,

but the want of hands to work the mines prevented its being procured. Not far from this town there is a mountain which contains wells of oil, and by working these our children have themselves been able to furnish an abundant supply of fuel to all our orphanages. On this hill they have also built a kiln, where they have prepared enough lime for the construction of a church, which we are now building in the prætorium of Tien-ta-jeu. Our children are employed in carrying the materials required for this edifice.

To correspond with the expectations of the people and the desire manifested by the emperor, we could have wished to receive more children into our orphanages, but this was not possible. It is true that one of our establishments is still empty, but it will entail great expense to put it in good order; I speak of the orphanage given to us by the government, outside the southern gate, and intended as I have before observed, for children who are able to labour and study. On the reception of the imperial edict mentioned above, the prefect and the sub-prefect came to the spot to examine what was necessary to be done; and, in order to diminish our expenses, they gave us an adjoining pagoda, with all the buildings belonging to it. Our children immediately commenced making bricks for the required repairs, and at this moment they are hard at work. The studies of our boys have been a little neglected during the summer, on account of the urgency of the work, but they will make up for this during the winter.

All our girls' orphanages, except that for children under seven years, are industrial schools. The girls study till twelve o'clock, and from this time till the evening, they are employed in spinning, sewing, or embroidery. They make the shoes, the stockings, and all the dress of our children. Some of them make mats, used as mattresses by our orphans.

Let the continual increase in the number of our orphanages gladden the hearts of our dear children in France and in Europe. They not only save the souls of the children whom we receive, but they prepare future generations for heaven. The children who come forth from our asylums will become heads of Christian families; those who remain single, will still, by their preaching, bring forth souls to God. Our female orphanages are often visited by the wives of the mandarins, who are amazed and filled with admiration at the order which prevails. There is at present, the widow of a mandarin, aged about thirty-five, and mother of a child of six, who devotes herself and her possessions to the orphanage for little boys, in which she is ambitious of becoming the

schoolmistress. She is very learned and well calculated to fill such a post.

Just as I am finishing my letter, I receive the offer of a large establishment. I do not yet know whether we can accept it. The prefect has invited himself to dine with me and talk over this affair.

May God continue to shed His blessing upon us and our children. Ask this grace for us, and deign to accept the assurance of the profound respect with which I have the honour to be,

Reverend Sir,

Your humble servant,

Vielmon,

Miss. Apost. to Kouy-tcheou.

From the Rev. Father Chevreuil, Jesuit Missionary in Kiang-nan,
to the Members of the Central Council.

Zi-ka-wei, 15th Oct., 1866.

Gentlemen,

The letters of my zealous co-labourer, the Rev. Father Palatre, must have already given you sufficient information as to the present condition of the orphanage of Zi-ka-wei. The internal arrangements of the building, the distribution of each day, the spiritual exercises of the children, their manual labour—all this has been placed before you with a precision which leaves nothing for me to add. I should not, therefore, think of writing to you were I not persuaded that your ardent zeal for the salvation of heathen children, makes you insatiable with regard to the smallest degree of information. Slight details, in themselves without interest, have much for a father when they concern his son; and are you not the real fathers of the multitude of orphans who are supported by the Holy Childhood? This thought encourages me to write to you, in the certainty that you will read all with paternal curiosity. The little associates of the society will also, I hope, have pleasure in reading what relates to those to whom they give the sweet names of brother and sister, and for whom they are ready to make such generous sacrifices. I shall, then, speak very simply of the circumstances which occur to my memory.

We have received this year, a visit from Lao-Day, the greatest mandarin in Chang-hai, and the one specially charged to treat of matters of business with the European powers.

After having visited our college of Zi-ka-wei and shewing him-

self much satisfied, he wished to see the orphanage. "I have often heard it spoken of," he said, to the Rev. Father Superior, "and I greatly desire to see it."

We led him through the different rooms. At the sight of these poor children, all occupied in different kinds of work, he frequently shewed surprise and admiration, exclaiming *Tin-hao-ze! Tin-hao-ze!* which means: "It is a most beautiful work!" Of all virtues, charity is that which most touches the hearts of the heathen; it excites neither distrust nor jealousy. Without endeavouring to account for its origin, they feel that there is something divine and supernatural about it. Finally, our good Lao-Day was so well pleased that he left a handsome alms of forty piastres when he took leave, and soon after requested and even implored the Father Superior to receive two hundred and fifty children into the orphanage, who had been found in the cities taken from the rebels. But we were already full, and were compelled to refuse.

Amongst the Europeans who visit the orphanage there are some in whose hearts the long repressed feeling of religion finds entrance at the sight of this work of Christian charity, whilst others find that their old prejudices against missionaries have vanished from their minds. Here are two examples. A high functionary, a Frenchman, after having visited the orphanage, when on the point of leaving it, and already on the threshold of the door, took my hand, pressed it with affection, and said with much feeling in his tone: "Father, those who do such good works must have great power with God; pray therefore for me, who so greatly need your prayers." Let all the associates of the Holy Childhood apply these words to themselves; for it is they who do these good works by supplying the missionaries with the means for effecting them.

Another functionary came to see our college of Zi-ka-wei. In the course of conversation I spoke of the orphanage, and the work of the Holy Childhood. "I belonged to it in my time," said he, "I have given plenty of little pence for the Holy Childhood." A scornful smile accompanied these last words, and shewed me the prejudices which the word Holy Childhood awakened in his mind. After a moment's reflection he fixed an inquisitive look upon me. "Well, father," he said, "can we see the orphanage? I assure you I am very curious to know what has been done with my little pence." "Nothing more easy," I replied, "it will be a pleasure to me to take you thither." He wished to see everything, and I showed him everything. I observed his countenance, which had an expression of the most marked satisfaction; at last

taking my hand and pressing it with frank cordiality, "Well, father," he said, "I no longer regret my little pence."

"Will you receive a little Moses saved from the water?" wrote to me Father Loriquet, some months ago, from the island of Tsom-ming. This new Moses was a child of eleven or twelve years, who had been an idiot from his birth, and whose parents becoming tired of him, had exposed him in an old basket on the sea. The tide, or rather Divine Providence, intending to save him, had thrown him back upon the shore, where he had been found by some Christians. From thence he came to the orphanage, was baptised, and soon after fled to heaven, thankful for his misfortunes here below.

About the same time I received the following letter from Father Helot. "I send you a poor child eight or nine years old, whom his tigress of a mother has already attempted three times to destroy. She first made him swallow some arsenic, but without effect. She then gave him mercury, but in vain; finally, she threw him into a canal, where he remained for half a quarter of an hour, but was still breathing when rescued. A good Christian took him home, attended to him for some days, and brought him to me, saying: I hope that your charity will take a mother's place to him." He gained what was much better. The Queen of Heaven perhaps had adopted him, and was permitted by her Divine Son to call him to herself a few days after his baptism.

Another child was sent to me by Father Gandar. He had been adopted when quite young by a pagan who had no children, nor at that time any hope of any. For many years he was loved and treated like a son of the house. But the day came when this pagan had a son, and from that time there was a change for the poor adopted child. He seemed only a useless burden, and his little faults, which had hitherto been borne with patience, all at once became insupportable. His death or expulsion were now resolved upon. His adopted father took him one day to Father Gandar, plainly declaring that if the rev. father would not take him, he would kill him. The angry expression of his face gave reason to fear that he would keep his word, and Father Gandar thought therefore that he ought not to refuse the child. He is now in the orphanage, and except a little carelessness, his conduct has hitherto been good.

These little anecdotes show you, gentlemen, to how many unfortunate creatures the Holy Childhood opens an asylum in its orphanages. May all our orphans who have enjoyed its benefits upon earth, deserve by their piety an entrance into that other more sure and more happy asylum which this society endeavours

to open to them in heaven. This is the chief object of your desire, as well as ours. Let us unite in prayer to attain it. What cannot the united prayers of all the associates of the Holy Childhood effect upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus !

Accept, gentlemen, the assurance of my gratitude and respectful devotion.

E. Chevreuil, S.J.

BRITISH INDIA.—MISSION OF MADURA.

From the Rev. Fr. Saint-Cyr, Jesuit Missionary, to the Director of the Society.

Madura, 3rd Nov. 1866.

Rev. Sir,

India, in all ages, as is proved by the annals of the country, and by the letters of former and present missionaries, has been periodically desolated by famine. The cause has always been the failure or insufficiency of the accustomed rains, without which cultivation becomes impossible. But these famines had never been general; they had only desolated a province or two, whilst the famine of this year extends over the whole of India. Nothing like it has before been witnessed. Let us begin at the beginning.

When I first came to the mission of Madura, twenty-six years ago, twenty-five measures of rice sold for a rupee (a rupee is worth two shillings.) This price indicated great abundance, and the cultivator found it difficult to pay the imposts. Fifteen measures the rupee would be a price advantageous equally to the producer and the consumer. I speak only of rice, because other articles of food follow the same proportions. For more than ten years the insufficient harvests, the extension of commerce, and the increase in exportation, have caused an alarming and irresistible increase in its price. During the years 1862, 1863, 1864, it maintained a price hitherto unknown, and at last in the years 1865 and 1866, the harvests having generally failed, on account of the drought, rice was sold two measures a rupee. This was famine at its apogee—famine in all its horrors; and all the provinces of India felt its effects with more or less intensity. Whole populations fed during several months on unwholesome roots, leaves of trees, the pulp of aloes, the seeds of tamarinds, and other things equally unhealthy; and even these things were not to be procured in sufficient quantity. Whole villages emigrated to the large towns, or

to the provinces which they believed to be less severely tried. "It is impossible," says an official report, "to calculate the number of victims who have sunk by the roadsides or in the woods, and it is equally impossible to form an idea of the sufferings they previously endured." The journals tell us that mothers killed their children that they might feed upon their flesh.

A man who had lived in affluence in this town, has just poisoned himself, his wife, and his five children to escape the horrors of the famine. I shall never forget seeing four days ago a long file of men of the weaver caste, harnessed like animals to an enormous cart, which contained stones for the neighbouring pagoda. These unfortunate men, who were once rich, were literally only skin and bones. They were to receive fifty pence as the price of this slavish work.

This one fact tells plainly enough that the famine has brought a stagnation of commerce, and has paralysed all arts and trades, so that this terrible calamity falls upon all ranks of society. The feasts of All Saints and All Souls always bring a great number of Christians to church. Surprised at seeing hardly half of those who usually came, I asked the missionary of Madura the reason of this. He replied that the famine had induced them to emigrate, and that if it continued there would soon be no Christians in the town. The little kingdoms of Ramnad and Skevaguingue are still worse off, and if by the inscrutable decree of God the present harvest should not be matured, we may say that half the population of India will be annihilated and entire provinces changed to deserts.

Justice requires that we should say that the Government has at last ordered the remission of arrears of payment of taxes, and gives out employment to the unfortunate creatures who are still capable of it, and has ordered the transport of grain to distant localities. It also distributes gratis remedies for cholera, typhus, and other malignant diseases which always follow in the suite of famine.

To this terrible scourge and the maladies resulting from it, is now added the epidemic amongst the cattle, which however has happily not made great ravages except in the province of Salem, where more than 100,000 horned beasts have perished. An incalculable loss in a country where oxen and buffaloes are the only animals used in agriculture.

The rains commenced about six weeks ago, and although late, they have enabled the fields to be sown, and raised a certain amount of hope in the hearts of the people. Prices however have not yet sensibly decreased, and rice is still selling at three and a half measures for a rupee, which is exorbitant. We hope

for better days, but we must not be too sanguine. Even with a good harvest, all this year 1866-7 provisions will be dear, if it should not prove one of famine, because the resources of the country are so far exhausted that a long time will be required to restore the things on their usual footing.

To meet this terrible calamity, we have been obliged to suspend our church building, to submit to all kinds of privations, to restrict our wants within the narrowest limits, to send away the greatest part of the Christian pupils who were fed in our schools, to refuse admittance to many of the orphans who presented themselves, to decrease the rations of our children, to substitute cheaper grain for rice, in fact, as they say, to have recourse to all kinds of expedients.....May God have pity on us, and may the Holy Childhood not fail us—then we shall take fresh courage.

I have the honour to be, with profound respect,

Your obedient servant,

L. Saint Cyr, S.J.

From Brother Anthony Marie, Capuchin, Missionary Apost. at Patna, to the Director of the Society.

Patna, November 20th, 1866.

Rev. Sir,

.....I take the liberty of sending you some interesting details respecting the working of the Society of the Holy Childhood at Patna. The baptisms of Pagan infants have been more numerous than usual this year, in consequence of the famine, which however has raged with less fury here than in the countries more to the south-east. Prices have been those of a time of famine. An Indian Christian settlement at Patna is directed by Father Louis de Sicile who devotes himself to the work of the Holy Childhood. He has sacrificed his all in supporting the little Pagans who flock to him from all sides, their number since the month of June amounting to fifty-six. The mission neither can nor will desert this good father in so holy a undertaking. Then comes Belliah, the great Indo-Christian parish, directed by the septuagenarian apostle, the good father John Baptist, who has been our pro-vicar for thirty years.....One hundred and ninety children have been received by him, and how he supports this numerous family is a mystery. All that we know is that for their sake he deprives himself of all the little comforts required by his age and his infirmities. Thirty little boys dine with him

under his own roof; the others, whose pension he pays, are placed in Christian families. The Rev. Fr. Benoit, appointed by Bishop Hartman, as administrator of the temporalities of the Mission, assists him as much as it is in his power.

Let us pass to Bankipore. I will give you some particulars relating to the orphanage attached to the convent, some of which as furnished by the good sisters, are affecting. But how can I speak of the poor little natives who have been snatched from the horrors of paganism without alluding to their European companions living under the same roof, and praying in the same holy place? In fact, the little pagans, having the pious example of these children before them, cannot fail to follow it. Our little associates will learn with pleasure that under the fiery sky of sinful Asia, children are to be found who are pious, attentive to all their duties, and who love our Lord Jesus and the holy Virgin most sincerely.....Sixty orphans, almost all of them the children of Irish soldiers, are here, and a still larger number of pensionaries live with them. The youngest amongst these orphans from two to six years old, are charming little creatures. They call the sisters their "mamas," and will give them no other name. It is very edifying to see these children fill the chapel, lifting their innocent hands to God in the midst of a pagan people. Our sixty-five orphan boys, here at the episcopal residence, give us equal satisfaction. With what joy our holy bishop, Dr. Hartmann, must look down from heaven upon the asylums for innocence which he has founded.

Among the orphans (girls) are five converts who join heartily in all the exercises of their companions. They are quite unhappy when for any reason they are obliged to be absent from divine service. One of them especially is truly a model. Animated by a strong desire to embrace our holy religion, to which her parents are directly opposed, she already practises all its virtues. When I solemnly baptised a young Anabaptist on the day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, in the presence of the Anglican minister who came I know not with what object to be present at the ceremony, the poor child of whom I am speaking, melted into tears and begged the sisters not to let her die, should any serious illness attack her, without at least giving her conditional baptism. Her great desire is to leave the world for ever, and to consecrate herself to God in this retreat. Her companions are equally distinguished by their lively piety, and one of their greatest pleasures is to ornament the crucifix and image of the Blessed Virgin, which are in the school room, with flowers and garlands..... This innocent piety exercises a happy influence upon the native

girls, and we shall soon see its effects. What a different example is given to the pagans here, by so many Europeans who call themselves Christians! Let us now listen to the account of the native orphans which two of the excellent Bankipore sisters have been so kind as to send us. I translate literally.

"A pagan father one day brought us his little daughter, seven years old, and dangerously ill. 'Since she will die,' he said, 'I cannot trust her in better hands.' Our pagans, in spite of their prejudices, are convinced of the goodness of our religion, and that the children entrusted to us cannot but be happy. A pagan mother with her nursling had been received into the establishment. Whenever she saw the Rev. F. Vincent, the almoner of the convent, she implored him to baptise her child; yet she could not persuade herself to become a Christian, as she wished to be able to return to her own people.....The child was baptized, to her great satisfaction, and she left us. The pagan hawkers always begin their peregrinations with the convent, which they call the House of God, thinking that this will bring good luck to the whole journey. They venerate our holy faith, but the dread of being rejected by their respective castes prevents their embracing it. Conversions therefore take place only amongst the old, the sick, or the beggars, who have no longer anything to lose in this world. Since the month of October in this year we have received more than sixty pagan children, who were baptised, and of whom the greater number have already escaped to heaven. These children are generally brought to us half dead, and covered with ulcers and vermin. Our first care is to wash them, cut their hair, and clothe them. The infants are put into the charge of the elder orphans, who under the superintendence of the sisters, take maternal care of them, rejoicing at their arrival and lamenting their death."

"Since the month of October," says a second letter, "one hundred and five pagan children have been baptised. One of the native orphans is marked by extraordinary piety. Her greatest pleasure is to recite the Rosary with her companions assembled around her. Her lively faith leads her to believe that the sisters see God face to face, and she is pained if told that this is not true. There is nothing more affecting than to see the care she takes of those little bronze babies, seeking to put them to sleep, singing in a low voice these sweet words: '*God is your Father, Mary your Mother, the saints your brothers; and I,*' she adds, stooping to kiss the little one, '*I am your friend; I take care of you.*' This child likes to mark her clothes with a cross and the name of one of the nuns.

"Those children who come to us rather older, have at first, some difficulty in conforming to their new kind of life; for pagan children are accustomed to an almost complete independence; but the example and gaiety of their new companions soon gain their hearts, and make their abode in the orphanage very pleasant. One of these children was a mere savage on her first arrival, her very look made one afraid; and now what a change! she has become one of our most docile pupils, and has begun to learn her catechism.

"It happens sometimes that our children run away, but they generally return very soon, saying that it is not good to live amongst pagans. The greatest pleasure we can give them is to present them with pictures, medals, and rosaries. There are, however, people who sadly abuse the good we are doing. For the sake of getting a little money, they sometimes steal children and bring them to us, pretending to be their parents. One of these persons was lately discovered and severely punished by the tribunal. A young girl had been placed with us in this manner; her father, after having sought her for a long time, at last discovered her retreat, and came to us to reclaim her. When, however, he found that she had eaten with Christians he would not take her back, and yet the love of prejudice could not entirely stifle his fatherly love, for the poor man, every day, climbed a tree from which he could overlook the enclosure in which are our orphans, in order to look upon the face of the child he still tenderly loved. The little girl seeing him one day, called out to comfort him: 'I am very happy; be content, the better lot has fallen to me.'"

Permit me, Rev. Sir, to speak also of our native boys. The number of survivors is inconsiderable. We have only twenty-five, who all attend our school. The rest are either dead or have entered the service of Christian families. The youngest are with the sisters at Bankipore. I one day baptised a little boy at the breast, whom his mother wished to throw into the water, but gave him up to a Christian woman for two-pence halfpenny. The last little boy, whom I baptised received the name of Louis. His father lived near the railroad. One day, this child, only four years old, was playing on the rail, when a locomotive came up and broke his arm. Two Englishmen, brothers and Catholics, Messieurs Fox, who filled a superior post on the line, proposed to the father to send the poor child to us. The offer was accepted, and the child was brought to us, with five pounds, which these good gentlemen sent to defray the expense of his education. The unfortunate—rather the fortunate little boy, soon fell ill; I baptised him, and he died some days after. May we not say with truth that this child went to heaven by steam?

I told you in my last of an unfortunate woman, whom I found lying with her two children on the road, with her face in the mud, and dying of hunger, and whom I had brought to us. She died the same day; her youngest child died some days later, and was accompanied by our baptisers to his last abode. The other child—a girl, soon placed in the hands of the sisters was also baptised, and died. The father had died four days before my meeting with this unfortunate family.....All had fallen victims to the famine. I saw another time a woman with a little child a prey to the most cruel want. Such a skeleton! Such haggard eyes! I proposed that she should give her children to the sisters, but she refused, promising to bring a child eight years old who was also dying of hunger. She kept her word, and gave us also the first child; both were baptised and are now rejoicing in heaven. I remained at Patna for two months this summer, and truly I was chaplain to the dead. Not a day passed in which I had not to bury some little orphan from the convent. One day I buried two infants of about three or four months in the same grave. Two other orphans who had been also snatched from paganism, and who had only been able to run alone for a year or two, took each possession of one of the little corpses, and carrying them in their little arms like treasures, thus accompanied me to the place of rest. My mind was filled with comforting thoughts when I reflected on the happiness of the little bearers, and still more on that of the little elect of whose slight spoils they were thus the carriers.

The blind young Mussulman whom I last year baptised, assists regularly at our services, thanks to the solicitude of a young Christian woman, who has been lately baptised, and in whose house he is in service. Some young associate will ask perhaps, of what use can a blind person be? Of great use under this burning sky. He keeps the large fan which is fastened to the ceiling and moved by means of a cord in continual agitation. I am always edified when I see this blind boy kneeling so devoutly and praying at the entrance of the church. His sightless eyes are filled with more religious expression when engaged in prayer than is to be seen in many a clearsighted person. It is true that the direction of the joined hands, and the prostrations of our young friend, are not always mathematically exact in their direction towards the altar, but what matters this? The good young woman of whom I have just spoken, places the blind lad in her carriage when she goes to chapel, and it is an affecting sight to see these two regenerate heathens thus going on their way to the house of God, one taking such care of the soul of the other.

I always feel renewed pleasure when present at the school

exercises of our orphans. They are taught to read and write the *divanagari* by their schoolmaster, who is a Mussulman. He remains gravely sitting with his legs crossed opposite to his pupils, who are placed in a line in the same position. He has previously traced on the ground the letters and notes which are to be learned that day. Our good little black scholars repeat their letters aloud, tracing them with the finger on the sand, with a forward and backward movement of the whole body.

Our children are generally docile, and are surprisingly quick. At the end of a few days, these little Hindoos, often hardly higher than one's boot, know all their prayers by heart; but if they learn easily, they forget equally so.

You ask me, Rev. Sir, some particulars respecting the manners and customs, natural history, &c., of this country. Wishing to satisfy, as far as I am able, so natural a desire, I will begin by the description of a festival which I have just witnessed at Patna. It is one of the most solemn of the Hindoos, and another follows it a few days later.

The first is called *Durga*, the second *Dawalli*. The festival of *Durga* lasts several days, and the authorities of the country make these days holidays. Courts, tribunals, offices, all are closed. A grand procession took place towards the middle of the month of October; the object was to carry the statue of *Devi*, who is I think one of the incarnations of *Siva*, to the river, and solemnly drown it. The procession presented one of the most singular spectacles which ever met my eyes. In the morning I had seen a crowd of men pass in a direction opposite to that which would be followed by the grand procession, and one of these carried on his head a large vase full of fire, into which another threw at intervals a handful of a certain powder, probably incense, for at the moment it was thrown a great column of smoke arose. Two Hindoos, almost naked, preceded, carrying hoops, through which they continually passed their heads and part of their bodies with a convulsive movement of all the limbs. They reminded me of possessed persons or bachanals. In another procession which had previously passed, two men carried the statue of a god upon their shoulders, and handfuls of I know not what were thrown over its head; it must have been something very precious, for the crowd held out their hands or extended their clothing to catch some of it. Two choirs preceded the idol, one composed of men, the other of women, in rags, who were drawling out some verses in a languishing tone.

The grand procession at last defiled at five o'clock in the evening, directing its course towards the Ganges. An elephant richly caparisoned, opened the march. He carried two children, one of

whom, magnificently dressed, bore a standard, with great difficulty. Five or six saddle horses followed, without riders, richly caparisoned, and with plumes after the oriental fashion. These were probably coursers consecrated to *Devi*. The most interesting part of the cortege was a forest of banners, carried by a legion of men and women; but you must not here give the reins to your imagination and picture a set of amazons in rich and brilliant costumes, with warlike features and defiant eyes.....They were simply a set of poor, dirty, working women in rags, and whose haggard faces told plainly enough of the horrors of the famine which we have just passed through. They carried these banners for the sake of a few pieces of copper. Nothing very glorious is connected with these flags; they are made by persons who lend them at so much per day. These banners are a complete personification of religious tolerance. They figure at the festivals of the Hindoos; and at the solemnities of the Mohammedans. They are unfolded on the occasion of a marriage, and the English use them at Christmas, always with the same bearers. At last the god of day (not *Phœbus*) appeared, an immense statue, covered with gilt paper, standing at the back of a niche with a front like an altar, and with two little gods or imps by his side. It was carried by means of bamboo poles upon the shoulders of a legion of men. Poor gods! they were to be honoured by being thrown into the river. Another trait characteristic of the cortege was presented by the army which escorted the procession in two immense lines. These improvised soldiers, for they are coolies, belong to every time of life, and all shades of the human race. They are the debris of sepoy regiments, dissolved since the great mutiny, and armed with long staves instead of guns, they assume the most martial air possible. The dust, which rose in whirlwinds gave them a solemn appearance; you might have said that they had grown old in the midst of battles. Alexander the Great, when he entered Babylon, certainly did not make so imposing an appearance. It is true that the picture would have lost part of the solemnity of its effect in the eyes of an observer too rigorous in the examination of details; heads without shakos, naked legs, a frock half open, and leaving uncovered the back of more than one hero, singularly diminished the glory of the spectacle.....The crowd closed the march. Such a sea of people! such a medley of costumes! such a party-coloured display.

The great festival of *Dawalli* followed a few days after that of *Devi*. *Kali*, the wife of *Serva*, is I believe the principal object of this festival, which is universally celebrated. The mud houses of the Hindoos are done up for this day. The women act as masons,

and their hands serve for trowels. Goats, bucks, cows, oxen; are all washed over with red, particularly their horns: you may imagine how curious they look. The women do not forget to adorn themselves also. A long red stripe runs from the top to the end of the nose. Those who belong to the upper class use whatever colour they like best for this operation, and as this vermillion is dear, the red line is narrow and betrays the spirit of economy. The women of the poorer sort make use of the first red colour which comes in their way, and without much regard to the rules of discretion. Forehead, cheeks, and even hair have a share, and the poor women look just like furies, which is very appropriate on the day of the feast of *Kali*, the Indian Bellona. In the evening there are grand illuminations, even in the midst of the fields, and the whole evening is passed in festivity and games. Formerly these Indians would stake all their possessions, even their wives, on their play, but those horrors are now prohibited by the English Government. The following days form a solemn octave; songs resound, and offerings are brought to the waters of the Ganges. In my walks I observed several lamps disposed along the banks, and I saw a little troop of children carrying these lamps with a torch, and walking devoutly towards the river. The eighth day is a rigorous fast, it is the vigil of another festival called *Téhalt*. From the rising of the sun, and even before it, the whole population is to be found on the banks of the river, where all wash themselves from every sin. I remarked to some of them that it would be much better to wash their hearts and mouths from the impure things to be found in them, and they said that I was right; but this was all. On the day of *Téhalt* they make ample amends, at least those who are able, for the fast of the previous day. But these carnal pleasures must be enjoyed with caution; the laws of the feast prescribe that the meats served at it shall be perfectly pure, if the least impurity, even a grain of sand, is found, the festival must be relinquished. The arrival of any one at the moment of the repast would produce the same disastrous effect. The first misfortune is prevented by the women choosing and cleaning with the most scrupulous care everything which is used in these dishes, and the second is easily avoided by a person being placed as sentinel at the happy time of the festival, who politely begs any visitor not to come near it.

But let us leave these poor Indians, who so sadly abuse their reason, and speak a little of natural history, since such is your wish. I will content myself this time, without however making any engagement for the future, with speaking of winged creatures, whether feathered or not, whether provided with two legs or six.

I will not alarm our little readers by those hard words ornithology and entomology.....Let me first speak of the *Baya*, which must be carefully distinguished from another little bird which is equally clever, and is called the Tailor Bird (*Sylvia Sutoria*) because to make its nest it takes two long leaves which it sews together with fibres of cotton by means of its beak. The *Baya* is very common here. It is very like a sparrow in shape and colour. It displays amazing talent in the formation of its nest. It has a horror of serpents, and is very desirous to preserve its dear little ones from this enemy; but the difficulty is to construct a nest which shall be safe from a foe, clever in sliding in everywhere, and who was even able to insinuate himself into the heart of our first mother. And now admire the work of Divine Providence, which has made this bird into a clever rope maker. But you will ask what connection there is between knowing how to make a cord, and being able to build a nest. Have patience. Our little workman begins with the cord, and ends with the nest.....He proceeds to select one of the highest and most flexible branches of a tree, to the extremity of which he fastens one end of the cord which he has made of long grass, whilst to the other he suspends his nest, formed of the same materials. This moving nest cannot have the usual form, for the least gust of wind would then overturn father, mother, eggs, or little ones. Our architect has therefore recourse to a different style of building, and gives his nest the shape of a purse or flask, in which to prevent confusion he establishes two compartments, one for the parents, the other for the progeny. See them now all lodged in this aerial habitation, waving to and fro at the pleasure of the winds; behold them in the most complete security, and the parents dispensed from soothing their little ones by singing to and rocking them. This charming little bird is susceptible of education. A Hindoo once showed our orphans a *baya* who was a first-rate artilleryman. He astonished me, though it is true the piece he made use of was neither grooved nor an Armstrong. He began by charging his piece, placing the powder grain by grain—the operation was slow; he then covered the powder with a little paper; he took with his beak a little ramrod, which he introduced into the mouth of the cannon and pressed it bravely. The operation being completed, he placed himself with a hop behind the piece, pulled a string, which brought a little match into contact with it, and the explosion took place. The least alarmed of the party was the little artilleryman. Unfortunately his master had made him an idolator. A little god placed on a dish was put before him; he strewed some flowers of oliander in its honour, and then put some grains of incense into a little vase.

.....A last trait shows the admirable sagacity of this bird, and proves that lighting by gas dates from the creation of the world. Desiring that his children should be *enlightened*, he was the very first to use this kind of illumination. As soon as the shades of night have enveloped the earth, he goes out in search of gas lamps, brings them to his nest, and in the morning, to save himself the trouble of putting them away, he devours them. Now, dear little readers, guess what these singular lamps may be—glow-worms and fire-flies. After this say if you can that animals have no sense.

There are other birds of which I could speak, but I find that time and space fail me. My letter is already very long. I shall conclude by telling you about the locusts of St. John the Baptist, and proving that the great saint really fed on locusts, since these insects are very good eating. No doubt most of our little associates would be content with honey only.

Columns of these insects have visited us twice since I have been here, that is in four years. The first visit was in October 1863, and the second in July this year. I will speak of the first invasion.

I was walking with our orphans a little before sunset. One of the children all at once cried out: "The locusts! the locusts! they are coming:" pointing at the same time to a long cloud which approached from the south east. A few minutes after the locusts were at a slight elevation over our heads. It appeared that these insects formed the head of the column. They immediately settled upon the trees to take up their quarters for the night. Very soon the rest of the column defiled towards the west for the space of half an hour. They might be reckoned by millions; they reminded me of the passage of Tamerlane's army. The whole column settled in the neighbourhood, and the trees were so loaded with them that several branches were broken. The arrival of these locusts was a great recreation for our children, both European and native. The question was who should get most of them; they made them fall to the ground by striking the branches of the trees with poles, and then put them into sacks for eating. You need make no difficulties; the locust, which is about as thick as a finger, is a delicacy. The Hindoos are mad about them, and the Eurasians consider them a treat. Proud to imitate St. John the Baptist, at least in something, I ate a dozen roasted, whilst good Bishop Hartmann laughed aloud, and my companion at table looked at me with horror. *De gustibus non est disputandum*. When night came I heard a noise like a heavy rain falling amongst the trees, which was probably caused

by the visitors, who were supping amongst the foliage. At day-break they began to breakfast previous to departing; the table was spread in the fields, which were soon covered with guests, who did not think of removing till it was stripped quite bare. Then our Hindoos were seized with alarm, and in spite of their charity towards animals, and their conviction that the souls of their neighbours might be dwelling in one or other of the bodies of these insects, they did their best to drive them away. But how was this to be done? You should have seen them running by hundreds about their fields, just as if possessed, crying out and making the most frightful hubbub, with the striking together of kitchen implements; and their tomtom, which they made as good use of as if it had been some grand festival day. Thank God, the breakfast was not a long one; in less than an hour the army of invasion had disappeared.

It is time that I should disappear in my turn; but before I do so, permit me to offer you anew the assurance of the boundless gratitude and consideration with which I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Rev. Sir,
Your very humble and devoted servant,
F. Anthony Mary, Capuchin, Miss. Apost.

AFRICA.

MADAGASCAR.—MISSION OF NOSSI-BE.

From the Rev. Father La Vigne, Jesuit Missionary, to the Members of the Central Council.

Nossi-Be, 4th August 1866.

After having enumerated the benefits of the Association of the Holy Childhood under different points of view, the pious missionary shows what a powerful aid this society is to the conversion of Pagans.

.....It appears to a great many European Christians that the conversion of adult pagans is naturally an easy matter. Ah, gentlemen, those who think thus do not consider the tyrannical power of vicious habits contracted in infancy, and which have become, as says the proverb, a second nature. How is this second nature to be changed, so that the pure and divine seed of the Gospel may germinate in its soil? Look at that child, born in the bosom of a

pagan family; from his earliest years he has breathed a corrupt atmosphere; he has grown under the deleterious influence of the most degrading vices, the hideous spectacle of which he has had continually before his eyes. He has become a man; but what sort of a man! He has a soul without the consciousness that he has one; a God without knowing Him; for him all happiness is centred in the gratification of the senses; and in fact his life is little better than that of a mere animal. And then when the missionary comes to announce to this degraded being the celestial morality of Jesus Christ, what taste will he show for it? Is not a miracle needed as striking as the resurrection of a Lazarus? Well, I must own that this miracle is worked in many a pagan soul, and the missionary is every day the happy witness of it. But numerous as these conversions appear, what are they when compared with the mass of the nation? Ask the missionaries of India, of Malacca, of China. The best hopes for a mission are the children. Schools for forming them to become good Christians, good catechists, and even in time good priests.

If this is certain as regards missions in general, it is a more striking truth when we come to Madagascar. The missionaries therefore who have the charge of this mission endeavour as much as possible to multiply schools in this great African island, and in the smaller islands which belong to it. Not to speak of the mission of Nossi-Be, we have now three schools, two for boys under the direction of the missionary fathers, and a third for little Malagache girls, under that of the good sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny. The total of pupils in these three schools is about one hundred and twenty.

Amongst the pupils are a certain number of Caffres, or inhabitants of Mozambique, purchased by the Holy Childhood, from the hands of the Arabs. Many curious stories might be told relating to the history of these unfortunate children of Cham. The most extraordinary is of a kind of food which is peculiar to certain tribes of the eastern coast of Africa. During my apostolic wanderings in the extreme east, I have observed strange tastes about food; I have, for example, seen men who enjoyed a meal of corrupted meat or spoiled fish; I have seen a Chinese delight in dogflesh, and Indians find quick lime a pleasant condiment with their food. But now I have found people who eat earth. Some of the African children we have here, have imparted the love for this singular kind of aliment. It must not be supposed that every kind of earth has an equally pleasant taste, or equally nutritious qualities. This food is more or less esteemed, according to the greater or less quantity of clay which it contains. I remember that when I was

in the island of Mazatie, a young Mozambique in the sisters' school, rejoiced in the thought of a change of residence, consequent on certain restorations which were going on, "Because," said she, "near the new house to which we are going, I shall be able to get excellent earth."

As to the rest, the tastes of these earth-eaters are not so exclusive that they disdain all other kinds of food. They want a good deal, and in spite of the economy and simplicity of this alimentary system, you may well suppose that we cannot allow it. It is therefore only in secret that our little Caffres can have the pleasure of satisfying their unnatural tastes; and, besides, our young Malagaches, who justly esteem themselves much more civilized than the Africans, playfully rally their little comrades from beyond sea, upon the strangeness of their tastes, and you know these jokes are likely to have a much more powerful effect than our exhortations.

Young associates of the Holy Childhood, pity the unfortunate race of Cham, reduced to so wild a state, and pray much for them. And if you would now like to know something which will touch your heart, come and question some of our proteges in our schools. Ask that little African how he came to be here? "My mother," he will answer, "exchanged me for a strip of cloth offered by an Arab." And this one, Bernard Isimameda, how came he hither? "When I was quite young," he will say, "I appeared to be dumb and idiotic, and my parents resolved to get rid of me by drowning. Happily, a good neighbour who knew their intention, advised them to carry me to the fathers, who would be glad, he said, to have me. They took his advice, and so I came to school." Poor child! he at first appeared to be dumb, but now, you hear, he can speak. He appeared to be an idiot, and now shows himself to be full of intelligence. There are two more children whom their mothers deserted in the country, and whom a good Providence caused to be found and brought hither. But I should never finish if I were to attempt to recount the affecting history of each of the dear children composing our schools.

And now, gentlemen, permit me to give you the history of a little apostolic journey made in these latter times. I was one day informed that an arab craft had landed a cargo of little Caffre children on a point of the great island of Madagascar, just opposite Nossi-Be. I immediately formed the intention of purchasing them, but it was difficult to say how this could be done. On the evening of that day, one of our good and devoted colonists came to tell me that he was going on the following day to Nkisman, which was exactly the spot where the precious deposit was to be found. What a happy coincidence. I made him a party to my project. He was

delighted to be able to contribute to its realisation, and to travel with me.

We set out on the following day before daybreak, and after a fatiguing journey under a tropical sun, we arrived towards evening at an island close to the place.

But now, where could we find a place where to take a little repose? We knew no one in this savage pagan place. Providence did not, however, forsake us, but found us a resting-place in a *Rio*, or magazine of rice; which was situated on the seaside. As the door was open and the interior empty, we climbed this *Rio*, made in the manner of a pigeon-house, without any violation of its domesticity, and there we passed the night. Early the next morning we were stirring, and made our way towards the hideous counter of the Arab negro seller. His appearance was most sinister; how could the countenance of a dealer in human flesh be otherwise? I asked him, "Where were the little negroes he wished to sell?"

He led me to a miserable little enclosure, formed by some branches of cocoa-tree, he opened a door and what did I see? Ah! dear little associates of the Holy Childhood, why were you not also present at this heartrending spectacle? I saw there fourteen little beings nearly in a state of nudity. Thin, sickly, covered with vermin, and shivering with cold before a fire which had been lighted only to keep these frail beings from perishing before the wind.....And yet we were under the burning sun of the tropics. We felt intensely for the poor little things! But these emotions must be subdued whilst we treated the question of their purchase with their owner. It was a terrible surprise to hear the exorbitant price he demanded. 150 francs (£6.) for each of these little creatures. I had hoped a much lower price, and made vain endeavours, both myself and through others, to persuade my negro-seller to be more reasonable. What was to be done? If I took as many of the children as my resources would permit, I should be obliged to abandon the rest. The good man who had accompanied me suggested that if a native came from Nossi-Be, and were to act secretly for me, the Arab would be more accommodating, and as this advice seemed wise I determined to follow it. After many long and cruel hours passed in talk, we had to depart. I bade adieu to the poor children, who knew nothing of the object of my visit, and comforted myself a little with the hope that I should soon enjoy a conquest in snatching them from a twofold slavery.

I have not yet been able to make a second journey, but I have heard of the arrival of more children from a man who offered to

take me to them in his canoe. I have, as you may well believe, accepted this kind offer, and in a few days I shall again go and bid, I hope this time with better success. God grant it.

Pray Gentlemen, accept the respectful homage of the sentiments with which I am

Your very humble and obedient servant,

La Vigne,

Miss. Apost. S. J.

ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 79.—SEPTEMBER, 1867.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

Extract from a letter from Sister Martha, Sister of Charity at Tien-tsin, (province of Peking), to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

We invite the attention of our Associates to the sad, yet consoling account with which this interesting letter concludes, the funeral honour paid in that country to a Sister of Charity.

Tien-tsin, House of St. Joseph, September 8, 1866.

After having told you, Rev. Sir, of the blessings which our dear Lord sheds upon our various establishments, I must speak to you a little of our domiciliary visits. One anecdote, amongst many, will show you with what a particular providence God watches over His little predestined ones. We had been invited to go and see a sick woman. We went, but on seeing us she cried out that she did not want us, and absolutely refused our services. In the meantime, casting my eyes around the poor woman's room, I observed her child, to whom no one paid any attention, lying in its last agony. I hastened to baptise it, and the vociferations of the mother had not ceased before her happy child was singing a *Gloria* in heaven.

Other anecdotes are well calculated to stir up the zeal of our associates, by showing them that not only do we baptise little heathen children, but occasionally adults also. A catechumen one day requested us to go and see a good old woman of eighty-three.

I replied that at her age there was nothing to be done to cure her. "I know that," she said, "but I have already begun to instruct her, and if the sister were to come, she might perhaps baptise her." We hastened to her, and our invalid, already instructed in the essential truths of religion, immediately, of her own accord, demanded baptism. The Chinese, who always accompanies us, and has wonderful zeal in these matters, remained with her more fully to instruct her and prepare her for holy baptism; a few hours later, seeing that the poor woman's last moments were approaching, she baptised her, and came to tell us of it the next day, full of joy. The good old woman was in heaven.

Another time, a woman who is well acquainted with the Christians, came to beg us to go and see a little girl nine or ten years old. The father coming up to her, said, "There is no occasion to explain to the sister the nature of the dying child's illness; all that is needful is that she should come at once and give her the pledge of heaven." There was time to instruct and baptise her, and the dear child felt so happy, that she made them bring her to us the next day that she might die in our convent. Three days later she was amongst the angels.

A man far advanced in years, and near his end, recollected that while he worked for us he had heard of the religion and the baptism which lead persons to heaven. On receiving the advice which we sent him by one of his friends, he immediately sent for the missionary to instruct him, and upon the invitation of the sick man, we also came to visit him. It is impossible to describe the joy of the good old man. "Do you know," he said, "the missionary has been to instruct me and has promised to baptise me. Oh, how happy I am! Yes, I desire to die a Christian." Finding himself worse the following day, he sent for the priest and the sisters. The first of them opened heaven to him.

Here is another instance still more striking. We were one day invited to visit a sick girl about fifteen years of age. We found her without pulse. The parents themselves said that it was impossible to save her, for that she had been in that condition for five days. In order to satisfy them we gave her, however, a little medicine. The next day they came to tell us that the attacks were less severe, and from that time they had evidently more confidence in us. In spite of this apparent amendment, the poor child remained in a sad state, and I therefore told the mother that though there was really no means of saving the life of her daughter, we had one which would help in the salvation of her soul. The afflicted mother replied that she would ask her husband if he wished this means to be employed. In the evening the father came himself to tell us

that he wished most earnestly that the soul of his daughter should be saved, and pressed us not to lose a moment. The interesting girl received us with joy, and expressed her wish to be instructed. We gladly left with her a Chinese postulant, to teach her the chief truths of religion, and, wonderful to relate, the mother and aunt helped to instruct the invalid, by repeating the expressions of the postulant when she did not quite understand them. It was a great happiness to hear her exclaiming on the following day: "Yes, I believe; yes, I believe. Why should I not believe, for I desire to go to heaven? Yes, I will give up all my superstitions in order that I may receive the pledge of heaven." As she was in such good dispositions, and I was fearful for the night, I at once baptised her in the presence of her parents, who seemed to wish me to do so. She then renewed her promises, which she did several times, till on the following day she went to sing the mercies of the Lord for ever.

Having given you a share in some of our causes for comfort, Rev. Sir, I must not pass over in silence the sad trial to which it has pleased our dear Lord to subject us. I believe you are already acquainted with our sorrow. The Divine Master has chosen a victim from amongst us. On the thirteenth of August He required this sacrifice of us, in the person of our dear sister, Cecilia Dodot. That day she rose with the community, assisted at mass and received Holy Communion. The rest of the morning she employed as usual in bestowing her assiduous care upon her dear invalids of the dispensary. Our dear sister was taken from us as by a thunderbolt, and we can also say that according to her wish she died with her arms in her hand. We have not been able exactly to ascertain the nature of the attack which carried her off. We believe that it was either an attack of the heart or apoplexy. She was thirty-five years of age.

It will not be out of place here to say a few words concerning the funeral ceremony. You will perceive that though we have not the gratification of seeing the whole of the town of Tien-Tsin converted to Christianity, our pagans at least know how to respect the august sign of our holy religion. The Rev. Thierry wished that for the first time the interment should be made, as in Catholic countries, with all the ceremonies of the Church. The time fixed was six o'clock in the morning. The English and French consuls, as well as several European ladies and gentlemen, honoured us with their presence. The consul had the French flag placed upon the coffin of our beloved companion, saying, "I wish to do homage to one whose virtues have so much contributed to render our nation and our holy religion respected." After the service the procession

moved in the following order. First the Chinese tam-tam to lead the way for the cross, which was carried openly through the streets of the city, our dear orphan boys of the Holy Childhood, each with a lighted taper in his hand, the catechists of the town in full dress, the clergy and choir singing the Office for the Dead, and lastly, came the corpse, carried by eight men. Immediately after that came the sisters and the orphan girls, each having also a candle in her hand. A numerous concourse of other persons followed.....all our children were in deep mourning; the little boys wore a white sash about four inches broad, and reaching to the knees; the little girls had a white band about three inch broad round the head.

You ask, probably, what effect was produced by this ceremony in a town unaccustomed to such a spectacle? You will be surprised, dear associates, to learn that the silence was universal, and that all moved to make way for the cross and procession. You might have thought yourself in France, so great was the order and respect with which all was done.

How much it is to be wished that our poor Pagans and Protestants also, would at last open their eyes to the true light. Upon the latter a certain impression was certainly produced. They could not help saying: "The Catholic religion alone has such ceremonies, ours does nothing of the kind."

Pray accept, Rev. Sir, the respectful homage with which I have the honour to be

Your very humble Servant,
Sister Martha, Sister of Charity.

P.S.—I cannot close this sheet without relating an anecdote for the amusement of our dear associates, it will give them another instance of the superstitious motives of our poor Chinese pagans.

Yesterday, which was according to their reckoning the 15th of the 8th moon, was a great festival with them. These poor people adore a certain shadow which is seen on the moon, and which they call "the eyes of the moon," though some assert that it is the head of a white rabbit, which they also worship. This day is devoted to various superstitions; they make the Kou-teau, or great reverence, and have prayers and pilgrimages to the pagodas, and the festival concludes, like many others, with a great entertainment, which consists in eating a great quantity of pork, and of pretty cakes, which they call moon-cakes, and which are made in the form of a crescent. Now, this very evening, an unfortunate circumstance has occurred, to trouble all this pagan enjoyment. At eight o'clock, as I was reading over my letter, I was suddenly interrupted by such an alarm as I had never before heard. The tam-tam, which usually

announces a fire, made a frightful noise. We hastened to the terrace and looked on all sides, expecting to see the flames; but all around was in obscurity—the noise, however, continued, and it was then conjectured, that as there was so much noise, the fire was probably in the house of a mandarin. In the mean time, one of our sisters, who was going to the children to comfort them in case they should be frightened, met one of the catechumens employed in the house, who told her that it was not a fire, but an eclipse of the moon which was announced. The pagans believe that a dog devours her, and make all this noise to hinder it. Poor deluded people. The more noise they made, the more did the beautiful planet hide herself, saying, as it were, “Adore my Creator and not me.” They did not, however, cease till the moon appeared in all her beauty, about midnight; then, I suppose, they were convinced that the said dog had not eaten her, though perhaps in their blindness they flattered themselves that their noise had driven him away.

From Sister Louisa Cupis, Sister of Charity at Hong-Kong, to the
Director of the Society.

From the Italian.

After expressing her great gratitude for the previous assistance granted by the Central Council of the Society to the Asylum at Hong-Kong, and her confidence in the continuance of so necessary an aid, Sister Cupis gives some fresh details about the young inmates of this Asylum, directed by her with such devoted care.

Hong-Kong, 24th Oct., 1867.

..... I remember having given you the history of a little girl who died of small pox, with the most edifying piety at the beginning of May. Cut off like a little flower, perhaps by the intercession of our sweet Mother Mary, to be transplanted to the gardens of the elect in paradise.....As her last moments approached, her sister drew near her smiling; “My little Mariette,” said she, “at last you are satisfied; you are now at the gates of paradise. We have a favour to ask you, which is, that as soon as you enter, you will throw yourself at the feet of Mary, and beg her to obtain of her divine Son that He would touch the heart of poor Emily. Tell her that she cannot refuse you this favour.” Mariette listened to

the commission, promised to execute it, and a moment after expired.

This Emily is another little Catholic child who was brought to us dying and insensible, and to whom, whilst in this condition, the sacrament of Extreme Unction was given. Great and affectionate care restored her. She recovered her senses and began to move. We immediately took advantage of this to prepare her for confession. The poor child, however, no sooner became aware of this, than she resolutely shut, not only her ears, but even her mouth that she might escape this duty; she pretended to be dumb. Sometimes indeed, forgetting her self-imposed silence, she would suffer a few words to escape, but she was too perfectly on her guard, when in the presence of the Father Missionary, or our own, to utter a single word. In our anxiety for her, we let slip no opportunity of persuading her to have recourse to this divine remedy, the great cure for the deep wounds of her soul. We had, in fact, exhausted every means, when our merciful Lord inspired us with the idea of employing our dear Mariette, who during her illness had comprehended with a precarious intelligence, the evil dispositions of the unfortunate child, as an intercessor in her behalf. We recommended Emily to the prayers of her late companion.

The sun of this happy day had not yet set, when Emily, opening spontaneously her obstinate lips, was heard to say, "I want the Father, I wish to confess." Our Father Superior was immediately sent for. Emily made a humble confession the same day; again the day following, and several more times. She also received Holy Communion, and at last, strengthened anew by the sacrament of Extreme Unction, she died, tranquil and resigned, on the day of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

On another occasion, a dying pagan girl was brought to us..... What was to be done? She was at the last extremity, but no one can be baptised at the age of reason, without knowing at least the principal mysteries of the Faith, and wishing to be a Christian. We hardly knew what to do, for there was no time to be lost. We recommended the poor child to our Blessed Lady, begging her to intercede with her divine Son that He would move the heart of this poor child. She survived only nine hours, but during this short time, our dear Lord gave her so much feeling, devotion, and intelligence, that she was capable of being received into the bosom of the Church here, and as we confidently hope into the bosom of God hereafter.

Here is another anecdote containing a pleasant episode. The young readers of the *Annals* will see that there are well disposed

children in China as in other places, and will, I hope, be edified accordingly. We have still amongst our young orphan girls a few who have run away to escape from the tyranny of cruel masters, by whom they had been reduced to a miserable state. Others have been led to us by the wonderful ways of the loving Providence which watches continually over its children. One of these children had been sold, as it appears, by her own mother to a Chinese woman of bad character, with whom she lived for a long time as a slave. It happened that she several times met long files of our children on their way to Mass, and on examining their countenances with a degree of curiosity, she thought she remarked a content and serenity which she felt painfully to be wanting in herself. "They seem happy," she said to herself, "well, why cannot I be so likewise?" She conceived a violent desire to know more about them, and soon found an excellent opportunity for satisfying herself. She made the acquaintance of a Christian woman, who told her all that she knew about our children and ourselves. The girl's wishes being only strengthened by it, she opened her heart entirely to her confidant, who advised her to run away. She resolved to do so. God gave His blessing to this difficult enterprise, and she is now with us. The search of her furious mistress extended in all directions without reaching us. Always unsuccessful, but preserving the hope of finding her at last, this wicked woman swore that if she could once more get her into her hands, she would beat her till she had only life enough left to make her worth selling again, and would thus avenge herself of the affront which had been offered her. But as I have said, God would not permit her to find her child. Her father who met her one day was better disposed, and he offered to take her home with him if she liked it, but she preferring to remain with us, he consented. She is a very good girl; is very happy to find herself in the orphanage, and has a great desire for holy baptism. Her only trouble is, that having a bad memory, she cannot learn the Christian Doctrine quickly enough. "But how do you manage," she said to one of her companions, "how do you manage to remember the instructions so easily and retain them so long? For me, whatever attention I pay, I can hardly remember anything." Her companion, a playful child, invented a joke in reply, at the expense of this simple creature. "Oh, do not you know how to learn easily? listen, and I will tell you. Take a mug of boiling water, and drink it all just before you begin your studies; after you have tried it tell me the result." The day following the poor child was there with her mug in her hand, forcing herself to swallow the hot water much as her tongue and throat were burned by it. Being observed by one of the sisters

she was undeceived ; however, our Lord was pleased to reward her good will by giving her a greater facility in acquiring the knowledge necessary for the speedy accomplishment of her desire to be a Christian.

In the last anecdote which I shall relate, our dear associates will see a new example of the power of the prayers of pious children in the conversion of their parents. Our school had been attended for the last four years, by two little girls whose sweet and submissive character has from the first engaged both our affection and that of their young companions. The greater our love for them, the more were we pained when we thought of their deplorable condition. The daughters of a negligent Catholic father, and of a pagan mother, they had but a sad example before their eyes. They had been baptised, but under the influence of their mother they offered incense to the devil, and bent their faces to the ground before his images. How many prayers were offered to heaven for this unfortunate family ! But all seemed in vain. In the meantime the little girls grew up, and with increased years and the religious instruction which they received here, they began to refuse to join with their mother in her superstitious practices, and at last determined to endeavour to obtain by their prayers and their good conduct, the grace of their parent's conversion. Tears were joined to the fervent prayers of these dear children. They both made their first Communion, and their first request at the feet of the unspotted Lamb Whom they had just received into their hearts, was the conversion of their parents. For some time no hope dawned upon them. But the Lord is the Master of hearts, and He sometimes works in a moment, the change which He has long delayed to produce. The mother of our good children felt hers to be suddenly affected without her knowing from whence such a change could proceed. She declared one day that she desired to be a Christian, and the word was followed by the act. On a Saturday, when we were all assembled for our spiritual reading, a visit from this woman was announced. I went to meet her and my attention was drawn to the unusual modesty of her attire, and the humble manner in which she addressed me. I talked to her about her children, of their progress, of the interest I took in their improvement, and other similar subjects, and I then asked her if she had not come to speak about them ? " No," she replied, with a trembling voice and a colourless face ; " no, I am come about myself ; I am come to request to be instructed, for I wish to be a Christian." Tears glistened under her eyelids, and I could not myself conceal my emotion. I congratulated with her on so good a determination. " We will gladly contribute as much as we can," I said, " to enable

you to obtain speedily so great a benefit. Choose the time which will best suit you for coming here to learn the doctrine of Jesus Christ. To-morrow will be Sunday; the usual instruction will be given to poor women, but if you have any dislike to appearing at that time, we will instruct you privately." "Oh, no," she replied, "I wish to be seen there; every one may know that I wish to become a Christian." The next day the two children came as usual to the oratory. But unusual happiness shone in their countenances, and the elder, throwing herself on the neck of one of her friends, exclaimed, "Oh, how happy I am!" The next moment she was looking with complacency on her mother, whom she observed amongst the numerous troop of poor women who came for instruction, and who was now for the first time about to listen to the Divine Word. From that time the woman, stealing away as much as she could from her domestic duties, and the attractions of her last little one, only a few months old, came here regularly for two or three hours every day, during which time she applied herself entirely to the study and understanding of the holy truths of the religion she so greatly desired to embrace; even this did not satisfy her. She asked and obtained leave to pass a month with us, in order to be able more fully to attain her object when entirely free from all distraction. She passed this time in the strictest seclusion, dividing her days between study and prayer. During this time, having obtained her confidence more fully, we asked her in what manner so great a change had been produced in her? "I do not know," she replied, "for it was the work of a single moment. I felt, as it were, a dart into my heart, a light in my mind, but so strong and so convincing that it was impossible to resist them."

How can we fail to recognize in this the goodness of the Lord, who was pleased in an instant to grant the prayers of these two good little girls? At the same time they had the comfort of seeing their father also approach the sacraments, which he had not done for many years. A new pleasure was in store for them, when, after a few days, they were present in our chapel at the baptism and confirmation of their mother. When this ceremony, which the circumstances rendered still more touching, was completed, they both came, for the first time, to ask their mother's blessing, and to kiss her hand. The holy joy the mother then experienced shone in her looks rather than expressed itself in words. When the emotions of the soul are very deep, they have no more eloquent expression than silence.

The new Christian returned to the care of her family, and gave great edification by her most holy conduct. She had not yet

received the holy Eucharist, and this was her only unfulfilled wish. She came here every day that she might be more fully instructed and better prepared, though she already knew enough to be dying with impatience to unite herself with her Lord. Of this we had an affecting proof. It was Holy Thursday. She arrived here, panting and with a flushed face. We asked her the reason of this, and if she had by chance not come as usual in her chair. "Oh, no!" she replied, "Jesus on this day carried his cross, and shall I, a sinner, seek all these comforts? It was the first time that she had appeared in public on foot, which especially after her recent change, could not fail to cause her some confusion. Then addressing the sister who had the charge of instructing her, and in whom she placed the most affectionate confidence: "Alas! if you knew," she cried; "I have sullied my soul afresh; I have already committed a sin." "What have you done?" asked the sister. "This morning at Mass, when I saw so many going up to the altar, to receive Jesus Christ, I felt very envious, and have you not taught me that envy is a serious sin?" The sister comforted her, telling her that this was a holy feeling, and far from being culpable, she ought to entertain and increase it as much as she could. It is the most excellent preparation, and the best disposition for approaching this august sacrament.

At last the feast of Pentecost, which was to crown her happiness, arrived; she had sighed after it with the most ardent desire. On the Eve of this day she was obliged to cover her eyes with her hands when some persons went to receive Communion, so irresistibly was she inclined to follow them. The night which preceded the great act of union with her Saviour, was passed in anguish and sleeplessness; it appeared to her as if the sun, which was to bring the true Sun of Life to her soul, would never rise. But the blessed moment at length did arrive. She was satisfied; Jesus reposed in her heart and a celestial calm succeeded her previous anxiety. Having once obtained this great grace, she entreated not to be condemned to the reserve which is usually practised at first with neophytes, to whom Holy Communion is not permitted too frequently. All feasts are her feasts, and she can give such good reasons to her confessor to be admitted oftener, that seeing besides that her conduct is in complete accordance with her wishes, he cannot refuse her what she so ardently desires. She is up with the dawn, and her first act is prayer. She is careful that all belonging to her recite devoutly the usual prayers, and arrive in time for mass. She is patient and tranquil in the midst of her domestic life; she attends assiduously the sacred offices of the Church, and the coldest hearts cannot but admire when they see her in the church

between her little girls, a model of devotion and piety. In fact, this family, once a subject for general compassion, is now the edification of all. Nothing more remains but to beg our Lord to crown all the graces which He has bestowed upon them, by the greatest of all, that of holy perseverance. With this intention, we recommend them strongly to the fervent prayers of the dear associates of the Holy Childhood.

Before I finish this long letter, I must venture once more to recommend to them our poor children and their great needs. Oh! what powerful advocates will they be with our Lord, in favour of those who have loved, protected, and saved them! May the loving hearts of their young benefactors comprehend what must be our sorrow when we are unable to open our asylum, and, in consequence, the gates of heaven to so many souls, who have yet been purchased by the Divine Redeemer at the price of His precious blood. He has paid an infinite price to make them His own, and we sometimes are unable to lead them to His bosom, for the value of a small sum of money. This painful thought is a piercing thorn in our hearts. Ah! dear associates, lend an ear to our supplications which do but echo the groans of these unfortunate little ones, and grant us the power to save them all; to make them all children of God and our dear Mary.

In the mean time I have the honour to be, with the most profound respect, Rev. Sir,

Your humble and devoted servant,
Sister Louisa Cupis,
Daughter of Charity.

From the Rev. Dr. Ridel, Missionary Apostolic of the Society of Foreign missions, to his little niece, at Vannes.

(M. Ridel is one of the three Corean missionaries who escaped from the sanguinary persecution of which we have given the history in one of the later numbers of the *Annals*. It is impossible to read without emotion this letter, written by a confessor of the faith, who was one of the companions in their labours of the nine martyrs whom France and the Church now honour among the saints.)

Shang-Hai, 10th December, 1866.

My dear little Emily,

I have just finished a long letter to your father and mother, but I will not let it go without adding a few words to you, to

tell you a little story, that of the little Elizabeth..... We were at Kang-Hoa, which is one of the islands on the coast of Corea; the French soldiers had taken the town; all the inhabitants had fled, carrying their frightened little ones with them. There remained only a few persons, mostly sick and poor. As I was one day crossing the High Street, I saw a little girl about three years old; she was alone, and seemed very sad. I approached, and spoke to her, but she did not answer me. I gave her some pennies to buy cakes, she took them without speaking. I saw her the next day and the day following; she was always in the same place, always sad, always silent. "Have you had any rice this morning?" I said. She looked at me without answering. A man approached, and said: "No, she has not eaten; she is my child; her mother has fled like all the other women; I am lame, we have nothing to eat; we are all dying of hunger."

I had a little rice given to them. Three days after this I again passed the same place; I thought of the little girl but I did not see her. I passed once more the next day; on turning a street, some one said: "There is a child who appears ill lying before that door." I went to look, and immediately recognised the little girl. She was lying on her back on the ground, almost frozen; her face was purple with cold; froth came from her mouth; flies were flying around and settling on her face. She still breathed, and I hastened to lift her up. She was wet, and dirty. A young Corean was passing by. He took her on his back, and we walked together to the soldier's post.

We called the doctors. They stripped her, rubbed her with brandy, and wrapped her up in cotton to warm and recall her to life. The doctor said she was in danger and might not live an hour. I was much distressed, but I immediately recollected the great happiness that was within her reach. Had she died then she would not have gone into the presence of God; I resolved to have her baptised. I requested one of the almoners to administer this Sacrament, which he did, giving her the name of Elizabeth. I was easy after this; if she dies, I said, she will be a little angel, and will go to God. But I was happier still, when an hour after I went to see her; she was beginning to take a few spoonfuls of warm broth; she opened her eyes. The doctors had not yet quitted her, and the good soldiers, by whom she was surrounded, were preparing remedies for her and some food. She was the only subject of conversation. When she came completely to herself, and saw these men clothed in black (the Coreans always wear white,) she was filled with alarm, and never ceased crying from eight o'clock in the evening till two in the morning. She was like a little demon.

The next day she was pretty well, and had to be placed somewhere. There is no school here, nor any house for the reception of forsaken children. I was rather embarrassed, and went through the town in search of her father. I met him, and I told him that his little girl had just escaped death, that the doctors had taken care of her and given her food, and that she was going on well. I then asked if he would take her back. "If I do," was his reply, "she is sure to die, for I have nothing to give her to eat." "Well then," I said, "will you give her to me? She shall be my little girl, I will feed her." "Oh willingly," said he, "take her if you please; I cannot take charge of her, I am infirm and I have no rice."

I returned to Elizabeth, and declared that I should take her to my house. The good soldiers already loved her, and were sorry at my taking her away, but it was the order of the commandant. Elizabeth remained in the little house which I had in the French camp at the seaside, for a fortnight; her strength returned; she had a good appetite. One evening, an hour after she had eaten a great plate of rice, I was looking at her through the half-open door, I saw her try to lift a 3lb. loaf, but being unable to accomplish this, she knelt down, placed her hands on the floor, and began to bite the loaf with her little white teeth. I let her go on, and then called a Corean to give her another plate of rice, which she entirely finished. She was always very much afraid of me. I was dressed in black too, and wore a large beard! She might well take me for an ogre. However, as I occasionally gave her a piece of sugar, she ceased to cry on seeing me. One day I prepared a nice slice of bread and butter for her, and lest she should dirty herself I put the butter in the middle; she had no sooner tasted it than she made a face and spit out the crumbs that were in her mouth. I could not help laughing, which she no sooner perceived than she threw the remainder of the bread at my feet; thus I observed that my little Elizabeth was greedy and passionate.....Children here are not accustomed like those of Brittany, to good butter and milk, and never like the former.....The child had quite recovered from her illness; she was fat and strong, went out into the court, and even came into my room, but she was not quite at home in my presence, since I had been several times obliged to scold her.....When we departed, I embarked in the great frigate. There she kept close to the kitchen, and the man she preferred was the cook; but it was necessary for her to go on board another vessel after a while, and the sailors expostulated at the little girl being taken from them. "Father," they said, "if you will leave her with us till she is twelve years old, we will give her a good education." On board

the new vessel there was the same affection, and the same care on the part of the sailors. She had her holiday dress, and at the time of inspection she always appeared in this little costume, which had been made for her by the sailors themselves. When we arrived at Shang-Hai, I offered her to the sisters, who were enchanted to accept a little Korean. I went for her, and her best dress was put on; but she no sooner perceived that I meant to take her away than she threw herself on the necks of the sailors, clung to their clothes or their beards, and did all she could to avoid a separation from these good men. They embraced her with affection, and were quite sad at her departure, for they would gladly have kept her with them. When we got down into the boat she became rather unmanageable. It was impossible to comfort her. Annoyed by this uproar, I offered her all kinds of things, but she only refused them, and cried still louder. I wished to take her on my knee, but she struck me with her little hands and writhed like a snake. Then I reproved her very seriously in the language of her country; she was frightened and became silent, but I saw her little chest labouring with difficulty to keep in her deep sighs. She was taken to the sisters, and on her entrance all ran to look at the little Elizabeth, took her in their arms and kissed her. I learned the next day that she had got reconciled to the change, and already was fond of the good sisters. She was afterwards sent to the establishment of the Holy Childhood at Ning-Po, where she still remains.

I have related this story for you, dear little Emily, and for your young companions of the Holy Childhood; your mamma will read it to you now, and you will be able to repeat it. I send you a picture of little Kian Elizabeth, you will see the costume of the little Korean girls, and you will pray to our dear Jesus and His holy Mother for them and for me. Adieu, very dear Emily.

Your loving Uncle,

F. Ridet, Miss. Apost. in Corea,

Of the Congregation of Foreign Missions.

TONG KING.

From the Right Rev. Dr. Barnabas G. Cezon, Bp. of Biblos, Vic. Apost. of Central Tong-King, to the Members of the Central Council of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

[Translated from the Spanish.]

20th Aug. 1866.

Much honoured Gentlemen,

Famine and pestilence, which have so cruelly decimated the ranks of our apostolic labourers, have, on the other hand, been the means of sending 17,380 newly baptized children to heaven. The famine was caused by the failure of two harvests in succession, that of the tenth month of 1864, and of the fifth month of 1865. The famine did not declare itself in full till after the second failure; it then broke out in a frightful manner. The missionary fathers began to make known that if no alms were bestowed upon them they should remain without any flock; and in spite of every possible effort being made, there were districts in which out of a population of three thousand souls, six hundred Christians perished.

The Pagans then endeavoured by any means to get rid of their dying children. They sold them to whoever would take them for a mere trifle. They even gave them away. They left them on the roads that they might not see them die before their eyes. After the orders which were given, the fathers, the sisters, and well disposed Christians, went about the country for the purpose of purchasing these children, and in a few days I was quite surrounded with little angels. Perceiving so abundant a harvest, I determined to have two large wooden houses built here, and three others erected in different parts of the vicariat. The Christians brought a great many children, but the Tertiaries of our Order collected a still greater number, owing to the constancy, the fervent charity, and the spirit of obedience which directed them. At times we had five hundred children in the two houses; but as they were almost always dying when they arrived, they did not long survive.

It was nearly the same in the three other houses, which were also large ones. Orders were given to bring the children from these houses to my residence, in order to lessen the expense; those only were kept there who were very young or were dying. The harvest over, the three houses were closed, and all these

small creatures were brought to me, so that I am now literally encumbered with children.....In this house, at Bai-Chu, there are a certain number of women under the direction of a Tertiary of our Order, and an old catechist, who has the charge of receiving the children and superintending the servants, who return home every evening. The elder children of my establishment have consequently been obliged to pass the whole of the night in carrying the deceased infants to the cemetery in order by this means to avoid the scandal which so great a mortality might have caused to these Pagans, imbued as they are with so many superstitions with regard to the dead. There were not, however, a sufficient number of women, for on the following day most of them had disappeared; others refused to come, saying that they would rather die of hunger than have the care of heathen children, infected with so many diseases. This showed me what a little way the charity of these Asiatic people and the faith of a neophyte would go. Oh, how often I thought of the daughters of the great St. Vincent of Paul! With what ardour and what joy would they not have gathered into their bosom all these little angels, so near to heaven!

I often remained with my catechists in the children's house till midnight, to see that they were taken care of, but being after all a creature in the flesh, I felt the need of repose. What a life! I was alone, without the help of any priest, for labourers were wanting in the vicariat. On one side there were the children; on the other hundreds of poor people with the cholera.....It was such a confusion. My days were passed in baptizing and confirming children, in ministering to the sick and to the natives, who came to ask for alms and died at the door of the house. At night I wrote answers to the missionary fathers, and fulfilled the other duties of my state. In spite of all our care and our zeal there were days in which sixty or more of these little souls fled to heaven. We had bought six milch cows to come in aid of our numerous nurses; but it was all in vain; we could find no human means for staying the departure of these little angels to the heaven to which they had been predestinated by God.

When the devil perceived what a fine prey was escaping him, he raised a strange report amongst the heathen. "The missionaries and the Christians," they said, "purchase our children to send them to Biu-Chu, where there is a great prison, in which they are shut up till they perish of hunger." These reports came to the ears of the governor of Nam-Diuh, who, like a faithful disciple of Satan, immediately sent secret spies to ascertain the truth. They arrived at night, but I did not know of it till the following day, when, thanks be to God, I was told by the principal people of the

town, that they went back full of the praises of the philanthropy, or, more properly, the charity of the European fathers. They spoke of the great number of persons who took care of the children, of the houses, the food and the clothing with which they were supplied, and from this time these lying reports have not been continued.

Another mandarin, an enemy to our religion, instigated by the spirit of pride, endeavoured to put a bar to the purchase of children, under the pretext of compassion. "It seemed to him," he said, "that in their removal to my residence, they were treated rather like animals than human beings, for he had remarked that the Christians always carried them in couples, in two baskets." I let him know that as soon as he had made good pathways and good roads, I should purchase carriages for the transport of these poor children, and not have them carried in baskets. The mandarin knew not what to answer, and, thank God, has not again interfered with the Christians.

I had one great sorrow, and it was this. At that time we had only thirteen native missionaries, who, scattered by persecution, could not devote themselves exclusively to the purchase of children. Each of them had the charge of two or three tolerably large districts, and consequently many children died in idolatry, not having been purchased or baptised. Oh! if we had then had the twenty-seven native missionaries, whom, by the mercy of God, we can now number, how much more abundant would our harvest have been! You will ask why we did not employ our Tertiaries? Because they were so poor, that, during the continuance of the famine, they were obliged to give up the search for children, being unable to receive them into their house, and even if some of these pious women went out to purchase children, the others were obliged to work at home for their own support and that of those already confided to their care. And yet one house of these religious was able to attain the amount of 5,006 children either purchased or baptised when dying. It is, therefore, certain, that if our zealous Tertiaries could have devoted themselves exclusively to this occupation, without having to work for their livelihood, we should have found that double the number of little ones could have been saved by these women so full of zeal for the salvation of souls.

Much honoured gentlemen, I am overwhelmed with work, and beg you to excuse me if I give you no further details to-day. May all the members of the council be kept in health and grace for many long years, for the sake of this work of redemption. This is the desire of your useless servant in Jesus and Mary. Q. B. S. M.

Father Barnabas G. Cezon, Bishop of Biblos,
and Vicar-Apostolic of Central Tong-King.

BRITISH INDIA.

From the Rev. Father Saint Cyr, Jesuit Missionary at Madura,
to the Director of the Society.

Madura, July 20, 1866.

Reverend Sir,

We have just lost one of our baptisers in a very distressing manner. His name was Louis, and he was a young man who had but lately engaged in the employment of baptising, though with very great success. We hoped much from his zeal and tact, and the more, because his high caste gave him entrance everywhere. He had a little knowledge of medicine, and was on this account well received, and even sought after. Now, it happened in one of his apostolic excursions, that he was bitten by one of the innumerable snakes which infest the country, the blood-snake, so called because the effect of its venom, which is very subtle, is to cause the blood of the person bitten to flow from the nose, the mouth, and even the ears. Our excellent baptiser was at that time far from Madura; the remedies which were at hand were administered, and there was for a short time some hope of saving him. For greater safety he was removed to the town in a cart; but, alas! hardly had he arrived, when violent hæmorrhage came on, and he expired in a few minutes. His death produced a bad effect upon our catechists and baptisers. Yet is he not in some sort a martyr? He caught his death while devoting himself to the salvation of souls. Louis left an unconsolable family, in which he was the favourite, and a young widow who cannot marry again on account of the nobility of her husband's birth. We have not yet replaced him, and to do so will be difficult, for the post of a baptiser is not lucrative, and there are few Indians who fill it with zeal.

Yes; snakes do indeed abound in this country; but by the evident protection of Divine Providence, no Missionary has ever been bitten. The case is different with the Indians; amongst them deaths are very frequent from the bites of these horrible reptiles. Two months ago, when making a journey, I stopped for the night in the entrance of a pagan temple. I had spread out my mat and was preparing to sleep, when I was aroused by the cry of a *snake, a snake*, uttered by one of my disciples. The animal was close to my feet, and was of a very bad kind; we killed it, thanking our dear Lord for His evident protection. Another night, soon after, walking in the dark, we encountered two more

snakes, equally dangerous, which were also dispatched. How does it happen that our Indians, who are always barefooted, are not more frequently bitten? Again, yesterday, travelling before the break of day, we met with and killed two of these reptiles, one of whom, as his name indicates, causes the body of his victim to swell in a horrible manner.

It would be impossible to give you the names of all our Indian snakes, as numerous in their species, as various in the effects which their venom produces. The bite of almost all of them is mortal if neglected, and is therefore greatly feared by the Indians. They no doubt have good remedies, but at the same time that they use them they resort to jugglers to conjure away the effect of the poison. We have eight kinds of very venomous snakes. I have mentioned the *Blood snake* which killed our dear Louis. There is another called the *Eight-step viper*, because its venom is so subtle, that the person bitten cannot take eight steps before he falls down dead. Another is called the *Tree snake*, because, it is said, as soon as it has bitten any one it ascends a tree, that it may watch the death of its victim. The little viper which in its size and the subtilty of its poison resembles the asp, is called the *Grass snake*, because it hides in the grass and is with difficulty perceived. The *Spectacled Viper*, which must not be confounded with the Cabro-capello or spectacled snake, which is oviparous, causes by its bite the appearance of livid spots, which announce the rapid decomposition of the blood. And lastly, there is the *Viper of Vipers*, a kind of dragon, with an enormous head, quite out of proportion with the rest of the body, and armed with long and thick teeth. If, says the proverb, its bite leaves the mark of one tooth you may recover; if of two, the cure will be difficult; if of three, it is impossible. Another proverb says; "he whose destiny is accomplished will be bitten by the Viper."

However terrible may be the effects produced by the bite of these reptiles, there is a snake whose venom produces still more horrible consequences. We have had at Madura for four years, a young man, an orphan, whom we call, named at his Baptism, Soussei or Joseph. Whilst yet a pagan, he was bitten by a snake which the Indians call the *Two-headed snake*, because it is not easy to distinguish his head from his tail, or else the *Snake which eats earth* or *which hides in the earth*. The poison which this reptile instills imparts a kind of leprosy, which renders the skin scaly, lengthens enormously the lobe of the ears, shortens little by little the extremities of the hands and feet, the joints of which are gradually consumed; and lastly, the bones are so attacked, that the unfortunate victim sinks, without apparent wounds, or more

suffering than that proceeding from a terrible itching, exhausted and devoured by the operations of the venom. This will speedily be the fate of our dear Joseph; as to the rest, his patience and fortitude are admirable. If this frightful poison once commence its ravages, nothing, absolutely nothing, can stop them.

Pardon me, Rev. Sir, this digression on the snakes of India. I ought rather to have spoken of the famine, of which our poor Indians already begin to feel the horrors. This must be reserved for another time.

I am with profound respect, Rev. Sir, your obedient servant,
L. Saint Cyr. S. J.

CENTRAL BENGAL.

Extracts from a letter from Sister Maria Lucia, Nun at Berhampore, to the little Associates of the Holy Childhood. (Translated from the Italian.)

We cannot better conclude our Missionary Correspondence than with this singularly affecting letter addressed from the centre of India to the little Associates of Europe. It is one of those pleasing and edifying histories in which the heart speaks a language which cannot be heard without emotion. Come then young Associates and rejoice for a moment in observing upon what good ground the dew of your prayers and your alms occasionally falls, and bless heaven, which permits you to contemplate a model of innocence, of angelic piety and of *naïve* simplicity in those heathen lands, where the sight of pagan superstition too often afflicts your view.

Berhampore, 7th March, 1866.

Dear little Associates,

Do not tire of helping us with your charity, remember that on your entrance into heaven you will have the happiness of being met with festive and joyful songs, by the souls of those poor little Indians for whom you have been the means of opening heaven, in having sent among them missionaries and others who devote themselves to their salvation. Listen then to the history of a very young child, who having learned to know his European benefactors, loves them too, and wishes to become their brother, by openly associating himself in the same Christian work, to which you glory in belonging.

Divine Providence, as a special work of mercy, confided to our

care a little boy about four years old. We received him on St. John Baptist's day, and he had been baptised three days previously, on the feast of St. Louis Gonzaga, under the name of Joseph. Our Giuseppino (so I call him,) the only boy amongst so many little girls, was the object of especial solicitude, and in order that he should have no communication with the other children, he was always with us. His volatile nature but little inclined to application, yet he showed a good heart, which with God's help we endeavoured to cultivate. As soon as Giuseppino could in some degree understand our love for Jesus and Mary, he showed a great wish to please them by the pretty questions he asked us, and the docility with which he did all he was told to do. He knew that his heart was the temple of the living God, and that sin sullied this temple. He would therefore run to us after any slight fault, saying with a mournful look: "Does the Spirit of God no longer dwell in my heart?" He was generally dressed in white, after the custom of these countries, and if he happened to soil his clothes ever so little, he would come to us in haste to ask if his heart was also stained. We took advantage of these opportunities to instruct him more and more in regard to delicacy and purity of conscience. He was very fond of flowers and fruit, and having heard that God made them out of love for us, he took pleasure in gathering these gifts of His goodness, and then with an emotion of infantine love, he would say: "O my Jesus, Thou hast made these flowers for my pleasure; well I on my part will love Thee and devote my life to please Thee."

This dear child had at first a little difficulty in rising early, that is at half-past four, to hear mass. Observing this, I said one spring morning, "How is it, Giuseppino, the little birds have already in their manner sung the praises of God, and you, who know Him and wish to love Him, are ready to cry because you must get up to go to church and bless Him." This was enough; from that time forth when he was awakened, his first question was: "Have the little birds yet sung the praises of God?" The reply being Yes, he rubbed his eyes and rose at once, he required no urging.

In imitation of St. Bernard he saluted the Blessed Virgin represented by our images with an *Ave Maria*, but not finding that he was, like this great saint, saluted in return, he came to complain that our Lady did not return his salutation. Every Saturday he practised some mortification in her honour, because he desired to be the *Benjamin of Mary*. At seven years old he was for the first time admitted to confession, on the 19th March, the feast of his august patron St. Joseph. I cannot tell you how full of heavenly joy he was when he returned from the sacred tribunal of penance,

and it was the same ever after. The day on which he went to confession was always a holiday; he called himself *the friend of the Lord*, and he went about saying, "I will not sin any more; no, positively not." I had told him how St. Louis Gongaza, overcome with sorrow for his trifling faults, had fainted away whilst confessing them, and Giuseppino conceived a desire to feel equal sorrow for his own. Whilst preparing him for confession, I observed that he wept, but I pretended not to see it. On returning from the church, he took my hand, and said: "Listen, dear mother, I wished to have as much sorrow as St. Louis, but in spite of all my endeavours I have not been able to attain it; I have succeeded in being able to weep, but I have not fainted away like him." On another occasion he teased us to make him a crown of thorns; "I want to put it on my head," he said, "to be like our dear Jesus."

I could tell you many similar stories if I were not afraid of tiring you by their number, but here is one which will perhaps make you smile. Little Giuseppino ran to me one day on returning from catechism, and said with an air of singular resolution: "Mother, do you know I am going to marry? Yes, I am quite determined." Not knowing what had passed at catechism I smiled and answered: "Come, come, my dear boy, be quiet. We will think on this subject by-and-bye, there is time enough for this." "No," he replied, "I wish to marry at once, because then I shall receive a 'special blessing from the Lord.'" Seeing that I was surprised, he began to relate how the missionary, when speaking of the Sacrament of Matrimony, at catechism, had said that "the married pair then received 'a special benediction from the Lord,'" I understood the reason for his wish, but wishing to turn his ideas into another channel, I spoke in my turn of the reward and advantages of holy virginity. He quite understood me and then said without hesitation, "Now I know all these things, I shall never marry at all." "Dear child, I replied, "may you, when old enough to decide upon your future state, be led by the movements of a pure and innocent heart, seeking only to love God and accomplish His Holy Will."

Oh! dear little Associates, remember Joseph in your earnest prayers, and beg the God of mercy never to suffer the infernal enemy to enter this young soul, to which He has given so many tokens of singular predilection. One word more in completion of the history of our good little Giuseppino.

In November last, on the feast of the Presentation of Mary he made his first communion. He was only 8 years old, but we feel confident that at this early age he fulfilled this important act with the most holy dispositions. His ardent desire to purify his soul from

the slightest spot, appears to be a certain pledge of this. When preparing him for his general confession, I gave him a picture of Jesus, an *Ecce Homo*, to contemplate, in order to excite him to greater sorrow, and I then added, "Who knows whether Jesus will be content to enter into your heart?" I was then silent and left him to himself. His intercourse with Jesus caused tears of sorrow or of love, I know not which; then turning to me he said joyfully; "Do you know Jesus held out His arms to me? and He said, Come Giuseppino, come and receive Me, for I am content to enter into your little heart." May Mary, our dear Mother, take this little angel under her protection, and serve him for shield and refuge in the dangers of his exile, till his arrival in the port of a happy eternity.

You see then, dear little associates, that if India is not a country which produces a hundred for one, the Lord can cause one to be worth more than a hundred. Extend then your generous little hands, for our only resources are those which reach us from our European benefactors. May our dear Lord incline your generous hearts to help us more and more, and may He shed upon you His most abundant blessings. And pray also for us, that whilst we are co-operating to the best of our power for the salvation of souls, we may also work out our own salvation; this is the desire which we all with unanimous heart offer to heaven for you.

Sister Maria Lucia.

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ANNALS

OF THE

Society of the Holy Childhood.

No. 80.—NOVEMBER, 1867.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CHINA.

From Rev. M. Vielmon, of the Society of Foreign Missions, Missionary Apostolic at Kouy-Tcheou, to the Director of the Society of the Holy Childhood.

Kouy-Yang-Fou, capital of Kouy-Tcheou, March 28, 1866.

The Society of the Holy Childhood has lately gained a new honour in Kouy-Tcheou, by the glorious martyrdom of one of its members. And his blood no doubt will increase the fertility of this land, which has already for many years borne happy fruits of salvation.

John Baptist Tchen, of the tribe of the Miaotse, was born at Sang-tao-ting, in the department of Taung-jur, of Pagan parents, on the 12th of October, 1842. Being left an orphan at the age of twelve, he was received, with his younger brother, into one of the establishments of the Holy Childhood. He was so reasonable and docile, that Bishop Faurie soon admitted him to the study of Latin, preparatory to the priesthood. He entered the college of St. Paul in September, 1856. John Baptist Tchen was not endowed with great abilities, but he was studious and diligent, and though somewhat wayward in character, he was nevertheless obedient and attentive to all the duties of a student.

Towards the conclusion of his Latin studies, in 1864, he was sent by Bishop Faurie, according to the custom of the mission, to travel with one of the missionaries, that he might acquire the apostolic virtues previous to being invested with the priesthood. He could not have been confided to a better guide. The imitation of this

old missionary would alone make him a holy priest. The Rev. M. Lions employed him as a catechist, and sent him to the Christian settlement of Tsin-tchai-tang, to instruct the numerous Pagans who were embracing the faith. But the evil one found means to disturb this happy movement in favour of our holy religion.

The rebels having been introduced into the country by the enemies of the Christians, the neophytes retired to their own camp, near the top of a mountain, into a cavern which served them as a retreat. The whole country, over a radius of about eighty miles, submitted to the rebels in order to escape disasters. Three camps only remained faithful. Tsin-tchai-tang, Ta-Ouen, Tcheu-Kia-yuen. But the Christians had enemies amongst the Pagans of the neighbourhood, and these took advantage of this opportunity to satisfy their vengeance and destroy their places of retreat. Having, in vain, attempted to take the first of these camps by force of arms, they endeavoured to take it by cunning. They came with proposals of peace. "We are of the same country as yourselves," said the envoys, "and though we have in appearance submitted to the rebels, we remain in our hearts attached to the emperor. You may, therefore, leave your cavern and come down into the plain, where you can pursue your labours and return to your own houses."

Little confidence was placed in these professions. Yet some of the chief Christians came forth, having at their head the theologian, or catechist, John Baptist Tchen. No sooner did the pagans find these men in their power, than the scene changed. The catechist had some Latin books. "You are a priest," said they. "No," he replied, "but I am studying to become one." "That is enough, you are a Christian, and the chief of the Christians." Then the pagans unsheathed their sabres, seeing which, John Baptist Tchen said, calmly, "If you had attempted to put me to death as a rebel, I should have defended myself to the utmost; but as you kill me for being a Christian, I am willing to die as a witness to my faith. I ask only a moment to offer my life to God." Then, having placed himself on his knees, he made the sign of the cross and prayed for a few minutes. The executioners then struck off his head, and those of the other Christians who had been thus surprised. Their martyrdom took place on the 26th January, 1866.

May this precious blood check the further effusion caused by the rebels, and thus give us the means of labouring with more efficiency for the conversion of Kouy-Tcheou.

Our seminary has thus two martyrs in heaven who have been taken from the ranks of the Holy Childhood, Paul Tchen and J. B. Tchen. They have gained their crowns when almost on the eve of

entering the priesthood. They never had the happiness of offering the Lamb without spot, but they have offered their own blood to the Lord who has received them in the odour of sweetness.

Accept, Reverend Sir, my renewed assurance of the profound respect with which I have the honour to be,

Your very humble servant,

Vielmon,

Missionary Apostolic at Kouy-Tcheou.

NOTICES RESPECTING THE DIFFERENT NUNNERIES AT CANTON.

To the Director of the Society.

Not only are our missionaries to heathen lands increasing in number at the present time, but simple women following their example, tear themselves from their country, cross the seas, and carry to distant shores the treasures of their charity and devotion. The Holy Spirit assigning to woman a place of honour in all great works of mercy, has said these touching words: "Where there is no woman he mourneth that is in want." (Eccles. xxxvi. 27.) It may be said with no less truth that wherever there is want a Christian woman is always to be found. Never perhaps has this truth shone forth with more brightness than it does at the present time in the workings of the Holy Childhood.

The good sisters of St. Joseph, of Cluny, whose arrival at Canton we learn from the following letter, will have for rivals and companions on the shores of China other Sisters of Religious houses well known to our associates, and whose names we love to repeat. First there are the sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, with their magnificent establishments at Ning-Po, as well as those at Peking and Tien-Tsin, which call forth equally the admiration of Europeans and natives. Then there are the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres with their noble establishments at Saigon, at Hong Kong, and at Hutto, a French colony in Cochin China. Our readers no doubt remember the interesting letters of Sister Benjamin, the worthy superior of this congregation, whose name has long been in benediction on those distant shores.

The zeal and devotion of the Canassian Italian sisters are also very admirable, and the letters of their worthy superior, Sister Lucia Cupis, are just such as we delight to add to the pages of our Annals, distinguished as they are by an elegant simplicity varied

with an impression of lively faith and the most tender charity for the poor little orphans.

In India the Holy Childhood has no more devoted friends than the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, called the Ladies of Saint Mary, whose fine establishments at Singapore and Penang, are the admiration of the inhabitants of these countries.

We must also mention the Sisters of the Society of Mary Repatriatrix at Madura, who give such help to the apostolate of the Jesuit Fathers there. The Milanese Sisters of the Congregation of Foreign Missions of Milan, in other parts of Madura have contributed some affecting pages to the present and former numbers of the Annals.

On the shores of Africa we find the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Castus which was established some time ago in the Two Guineas. Here Bishop Kobes, with the assistance of a Sister of St. Joseph of Cluny, has founded an order of Negress Sisters, who are already of great service. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny established at Madagascar are well known to our associates. We must mention also the Sisters of the Holy Family from Bordeaux, who have pitched their tent on the coast of Natal on the eastern shore of Africa. We must lastly speak of the Congregation of Sisters founded at Lyons by the Marist Fathers, and who already direct four orphanages in New Caledonia.

All these Congregations, and perhaps others, are worthy helpers to our Missionaries in their Apostolate, and particularly devote themselves to the special objects of the baptism of Pagan children. Honour and gratitude be to all these religious families. Diverse in name, they yet carry on the same work under the shadow of the same banner—that of charity. And now, having looked at this consoling picture, let us listen to one of the good sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, whilst she relates the history of their arrival at Canton, now become a new field of their labours.

Convent of St. Joseph of Cluny,
Canton, China, 10 March, 1867.

Rev. Sir,

At last we have reached the land of China, the object of so many wishes, and we are about to devote ourselves with all our hearts to the admirable work which brings us hither. Oh, how vividly do we feel the happiness of being chosen for so noble a destiny, and how ardently do we thank our Lord. The first impulse of our hearts was to return Him our grateful thanks; having once fulfilled this duty there remains none more pleasing than to

express our gratitude to the Society of the Holy Childhood and its venerated director, whose delegates and representatives we are, and to whom we are indebted for the favour which has been shown to us. Without the Holy Childhood no sisters would have come here, and consequently there would be no China for us. Let me then tell you of our safe arrival, and of the events which have occurred to us since we landed on this distant shore. Our voyage was prosperous; though after we had left Saigon we experienced one of those violent tempests which are said to be so frequent in the Chinese seas, and which are indeed something frightful. Our vessel, though large and solidly built, sustained terrible damage; the bowsprit was broken, enormous bars of iron fixed in front were bent like wires, and much more afflicting, a poor young man who was upon the deck was carried by a wave into the sea, where he at once disappeared without its being possible to render him the least assistance. He was a young Chinese, and had become dear to us on account of the affectionate devotion we bore to his countrymen. At last, after a day of misery, the tempest abated, our fears were dissipated, and on the 2nd December, the eve of the feast of St. Francis Xavier, we arrived at Hong Kong, the first point in the Chinese territory.

We repaired to ask hospitality of the good sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, who received us with the charity and kindness usual with the Religious of this establishment. We reckoned upon finding the Bishop of Canton here, but we learned that he had set out some days previous for Samian, an island sanctified by the death of the glorious apostle of India and Japan, and we heard at the same time that he would soon return. We did not wait long, for the next day his lordship returned full of joy. He brought us palms gathered on the tomb of the saint, and told us that in the yet uncertain expectation of our arrival he had specially recommended us to the holy apostle of the mission; at the same time he gave us a picture which had been deposited and blessed upon his tomb. Happy at these good omens, we wished to set out at once for Canton, but our house was not quite ready. The bishop wished to go and prepare it for us, so that we did not set off till the 7th, the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception. This new co-incidence filled our hearts with joy, and permits us to place our arrival under the protection of that Immaculate Virgin, who in China as in France, will be our mother, and next to her Divine Son, the sweetest object of our hope.

The bishop had left a missionary to accompany us. It was under the protection of the worthy Father Girardin, procurator of the mission, that we sailed up the beautiful river Canton for about

forty leagues. It is very wide and majestic. The banks are covered with palms and all kinds of native trees, which gave us some idea of the country we were about to inhabit. Six or seven hours in the steam boat brought us to the end of our journey, and in the evening we arrived at the immense and curious town of Canton.

I will not try to describe this singular city. You know it a thousand times better than I can depict it, by the descriptions you have already heard; but you may imagine how interesting it all was to us. What a novel spectacle that multitude of barks continually ploughing the waves, what a strange aspect in the town where nothing bears any resemblance to what we see in Europe; where the arrangement of the streets, the shape of the shops, the smell and even the quality of the air, has so new and distinct a character. And then the attitudes and manners of these Chinese, so well known, so often described, and yet having a tint and a physiognomy which cannot be correctly imagined without a near view of the individuals themselves. A strange novelty it was for us when we entered palanquins entirely closed, when following the recommendation we had received, we crouched ourselves as we best could, so as not to be seen by any one, whilst we ourselves with watchful eyes, observed, measured, and analysed everything which presented itself to our view, carried along all the time with the rapidity of a bale of goods which our porters were carrying to its destination. And we were without doubt a kind of prohibited merchandise, a sort of contraband goods, which must be prudently concealed that the Chinese should not be too much alarmed at the arrival of the first nuns who had ever set foot on the soil of Canton.

Having reached our abode, we found the bishop waiting for us upon the first steps of the entrance. His lordship welcomed us in the following terms: "Come from so great a distance to share our labours and solicitude in the great work of the conversion of the heathen, you may reckon on my support and my devotedness. The land which you now stand upon will bear its brambles and its thorns; but upon the whole it will be to you a land of marvels and of sanctification, and from hence, as the last point in your course, you will depart to regain your true country, the city of the elect. Courage, then, my dear sisters, courage! and receive the blessing which I give you from the threshold of this house. Rather may it be our Lord who blesses you, our Lord who awaits you in His tabernacle, who knowing your devotedness has even now His hands full of graces to be shed upon you." And then his

lordship conducted us to the chapel where all was arranged for the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

O what a moment that was! how sweet and penetrating were the words of the bishop; and yet the condescension of the Saviour was sweeter still, when coming forth from His tabernacle for our sakes, He gave us a fresh proof of His ineffable tenderness. More than five thousand miles distant from our native land, separated from all that was dearest to us upon earth, we seemed at that moment to find all that we had left behind. In his lordship we found a father, the sight of whom alone was enough to attach us to him as his children. All the good Chinese Virgins, all the little children by whom we were surrounded, were as so many sisters and young brothers, who came joyfully to offer us the first marks of their affection. But more than all this, we had our dear Lord; Him for whom we came hither, and to whose service we have engaged ourselves. Kneeling at His feet we could but repeat the words of the Prophet: "How beautiful are Thy tabernacles, O God of Hosts. The sparrow has found a shelter, and the turtle a nest for her young; and Thy altars, O my God, are the place of our rest, and the holy place in which we may repose under the shadow of Thy wings." The poverty of Thy house and our own isolation are a thousand times preferable to the sumptuous abodes of the worldly. With such feelings we renewed our first promises, and offered ourselves anew to our Lord to labour till the last breath of our lives in the Canton Mission, which has now become the centre of our new family, the field for our work, and the place of our rest.

On leaving the chapel, the bishop called for the young women who had hitherto been at the head of the establishment for little girls at Canton, simple and good women, who have greatly edified us by their piety and spirit of devotion to their duties. They desired to prepare our first repast in China themselves, and were escorted by young girls whom they had brought up, and who are the first nurslings of the Holy Childhood in Canton, the bishop having received them the first year of his abode here. Several amongst them have attained their eighteenth or twentieth year. Following them came the battalion of little ones, poor miserable looking children, who bore but too plainly on their features the proofs of their parents' neglect. Some are, in reality, merely living skeletons, others are covered with ulcers, and half eaten away by them; others, on the other hand, have round and plump little faces, and give hope that they may reach to years of maturity. Children are brought to us every day. Three or four generally, and often more. Yesterday, a good soldier who has remained at Canton since

its occupation, has sent us a little girl whom he rescued from the hands of her mother, just as she was preparing to throw her into the water. These children, who are all poor, sick, and covered with ulcers and with rags, become our children from the moment they enter the great Christian family; and we already have for them those sentiments of affection which God has implanted in our hearts, to supply the want of feeling of their mothers according to the flesh. Happy shall we be if we can save them, for they will then increase the number of the worshippers of the true God in this heathen land. Not less happy should they die; for then they will pass from our hands into heaven, and in their eternity of happiness they will remember the affectionate care with which they were nursed by us here below.

But I must tell you about our habitation. Placed by the side of that of the missionaries, and yet separated from it by a street, and in the middle of the town, it is in the most suitable and convenient situation which could be desired. It has been built on a large scale to render it more appropriate for the purpose for which it is designed, and by way of showing the Chinese how worthy and generous are those projects which charity inspires. Every part is on a large scale, and well arranged, and, above all, so solidly built, that we shall be dispensed from any repairs for a long time to come. After having completed the main body of the building, as well as the kitchens and wells, the labourers are now employed upon the construction of a stable and granary, intended for the little flock of goats, which we are feeding, in order that they may in their turn supply nourishment to our children, as this is the only sure and easy method of providing for their subsistence.

In his forethought about everything really useful, the bishop has already provided us with several goats of European origin, which are indeed a precious resource. Lastly, all around the house there is a space about six hundred feet long and three hundred wide, where, in process of time, we shall have yard, garden, and all that is requisite to give this establishment of the Holy Childhood all the development it may demand, at the same time that we shall find sufficient space to enable us to have a little air and exercise without going out.....Pardon us this little indulgence, but secluded as we are in this country, both by the exigence of our rule, and the customs of the land, it is well that during the burning heat of summer, we should have a place of some extent where we and our children may breathe freely, and give ourselves a little rest after the fatigues of our life, in the interior of the house.

In spite, however, of the seclusion imposed upon women, the bishop desired that we should become acquainted with the neigh-

bourhood of Canton. Some days after our arrival, we therefore took our way, enclosed in our palanquins, towards the cemetery of the Christians, situated about half a league from the town. The flat part of the country is sown with rice, but the hills are reserved for burying places for the dead, and, upon these arid mounts, nothing is to be seen but tombs of a very elegant form, and well taken care of. Twice a year the whole population resorts to these spots, to revere the remains of their relations, and offer them tokens of respect; a proof of the belief preserved in China, as everywhere else, of the immortality of the soul. But, alas! as these poor souls had not the happiness of knowing and serving God upon earth, how can we conceive a hope that they can be admitted into His holy presence in the glory of heaven?

The cemetery of the Christians is in a little valley surrounded by hills, which form its natural boundary. At one extremity there is a handsome archway of granite, which is surmounted by a cross of the same material, visible from a distance in the surrounding country. At the opposite end is a little village, inhabited by Christians, who employ themselves in the culture of the fields, and are also charged with the guarding of the cemetery. The whole, perhaps, is about one thousand yards round. Roads and pathways shaded by pines and flowering trees, lead through all parts of this spot, and give it an air of neatness and elegance, which it is pleasant to find in these places of sorrow and sadness. It is right that it should be so, has been remarked to us, in order to show the Pagans that the Christians are far from neglecting the ashes of their dead, as these heathens reproach us with doing. It is a consolation to see the cross, the sign of our hope in the resurrection, visible from all sides. We were shown the part which is reserved for the Chinese virgins, and which will one day also be ours. We selected it as the place of our future rest, and we are willing to depart to it whenever the hand of God, in Whom is our fate, conducts us thither. But may we be permitted to add, that this place would smile upon us yet more sweetly if we could see an image of Mary there. A cemetery loses much of its sadness when an image of Mary is found at the foot of the cross.

After having shown us the cemetery his lordship wished to give us some idea of the superstitions of the poor pagans, in order that we might feel more sensibly for their unhappy condition. We were taken to two of the principal pagodas of the town. These buildings are large and beautiful, and many things are to be seen in them which are of fine workmanship and very valuable. But what indifference and neglect do these Chinese display towards their gods! Under what hideous and absurd forms do they represent

their divinities ! These poor people come every day to adore them ; to offer them tea, rice and cakes, and to obtain the services of which they are in need. Gods of wood and stone, who have ears and hear not, eyes and see not, a mouth and speak not ! What am I saying ? Had they been formed with the graces of the human figure, there might be something attractive in them ; but there seems, on the contrary, to have been an endeavour to remove every resemblance to the beauty of a human being, and to substitute the most repulsive and fantastic shapes ; no doubt these forms are similar to those of the infernal spirits who have inspired their originators. Some pale disgusting looking bonzes are attached to their service, and by their dirt and debasement add to the horror which naturally arises at the sight of these places. Oh ! how far, even from a human point of view, is this pagan worship from the ideas which are given to us by faith, of God and His Saints ! How still more beautiful and conformable to reason does our worship appear when it is placed in contrast with such repulsive superstition.

We hastened to quit these melancholy resorts of paganism. The fruit which we have gathered from this visit as well as from everything we see in Canton, and amongst the Chinese, is a firm and earnest determination to devote ourselves to the conversion of these people, as far as our strength and means will permit. Our task is already traced out. To receive and bring up the poor forsaken children who are brought to us ; to instruct the little girls of the town, whether pagan or Christian, who come to our school ; to dress the wounds of our poor Chinese, and to train young women who shall continue and extend in the province the ministry of charity, which we are ourselves at present fulfilling—this is the occupation marked out for us, and which we accept with all the fervour of our souls. If it should please our dear Lord to grant success to our endeavours, we shall not forget that after Him we owe it to the Holy Childhood ; and to this Society we already address our sincere and ardent thanks. Blessed then be the Holy Childhood for all the good it does ! Blessed be its directors and the members of its council ; blessed be the pious children who form its numerous phalanxes over the whole earth.

Pray accept in return for all the good you enable us to do, the wishes of our hearts, and the expression of the sentiments of respect and gratitude with which we have the honour to be,

Gentlemen and honoured Directors,

Your very humble and respectful servants,

The Sisters of S. Joseph of Cluny,

In Community at Canton.

Extract of a Letter from Right Rev. Dr. Eligio Cusi, Bishop of Piene, Coadjutor of Chang-Tong, to the Director of the Society.

[Translated from the Italian.]

Zi-nan-fou, 31 Oct. 1866.

Reverend Sir,

.....I informed you in my letter of the 20 February, 1866, that there was no need to send in search of children for our two orphanages, built last year, for even children at the breast were often brought to our very door. As to children forsaken when older, they used to come of themselves, to beg of me to receive them, till a diabolical calumny caused a little cessation of this influx.

Being in great want of a Church in the town of Zi-nan-fou, I laid the foundations of one at the end of March. Hardly was this done when a strange report was circulated amongst the people. It was said that I had buried two hundred little girls and boys in these foundations, to form a solid support to the European tower, then in course of construction, and that four old women had also been buried to take care of them. It was added that six hundred children had been buried in the foundations of the church at Peking, which is much larger. Who could even give credit to such a fable? And yet, before long, every one was speaking of this instance of European cruelty, and the virtue of charity being unknown here, many believed it. About the same time the Tchefou, the superior mandarin in charge of the town and its neighbourhood, ordered a manifesto to be posted on the gates of the town, in these words:—

“You very well know that there are many strangers in this town; now I have learned that both within and outside it, there are bad people, who by merely touching the head of a child with one of their hands, enchant, and then steal it. Such people being very injurious to society, justice requires that they should be sought after. I desire, therefore, that you should all endeavour to discover them, either by open means or secret, be they either within or without the town. If you should ever see any of these bad people, actually touching the head of an infant and producing enchantment, bring them to me and I will punish them.”

Informed of the publication of this *manifesto* I went to the minister of finances and that of grace and justice. They spoke

kindly words and told me to make no account of these popular rumours. A short time after my return to the house, a woman was seen going from one end of the street to the other, crying out with all her might, that her child had been stolen, and vociferating against the thieves. It was useless to tell her that she must go and seek her child elsewhere; she became only the more abusive; I was, therefore, obliged to inform the mandarin Tchi-chien of her conduct, and at once he sent soldiers to take her. Two days after this, Tchi-chien came to inform me that she had been well whipped, and that she would not molest us any more, promising that he would publish a manifesto in my favour. In the interval the child who had run away from fear of being beaten by his mother, for some fault, had returned home.

About the same time Mr. Martin Morrison, English ex-consul of Tche-fou, passed through our town. It was also said of him that he stole children in order to make a medicine of their eyes and heart, and that he had already stolen two, who were kept at his inn. This gentleman had, however, visited our orphanage, and when he went to see the mandarin, he explained to him and to another mandarin who was an old friend of his, what was really our object in receiving these unfortunate little creatures, and although a Protestant, he bestowed great praise upon this work of Catholic charity. At the same time he complained of the calumnious reports which were spread amongst the people both of himself and of us, and the effect of all this has been very favourable. Besides this, he left some alms for us before his departure for Tien-tsin.

At last, in fulfilment of his promise, the mandarin Tche-chien sent me the following *manifesto* :—

“I, *Li-cen-Sien*, of the family name of Yao, being decorated with the button of the second order, in the power which has been conferred on me by the Emperor, publish the following manifesto :—

“The motive of the Christians in building a church is that they may preach and exhort men to good. The inhabitants of this town believing those sowers of discord who say that the Christians steal children, and in consequence of this report, a woman who had lost her child went about with loud cries, saying that the Christians had stolen him,—I, having been informed of this circumstance, went with my ministers to the church. Therefore, to put a stop to this report, I publish the present *manifesto*, and desire you to give no credit to these calumniators. If any one should in future spread about such calumnies in the squares and the markets, I shall punish them severely, for such reports may entail serious consequences. But yet, if there are any persons who steal children, bring them

before me that they may be punished. It is not, however, allowable to believe reports which are spread without any foundation, and to speak evil, from which serious inconvenience may arise. I desire that you do not forget this *manifesto*. The said *manifesto* is published to all the world the 30th day of the 3rd moon, the 5th year of the Emperor of China, Jaun-tche being on the throne. This *manifesto* is to be posted on the doors of the church."

In consequence of this manifesto this calumny ceased almost entirely in this place; but it went elsewhere to exhale its rage, and to hinder the purchase of poor forsaken children and the propagation of the holy Gospel.

The provicar-general of the district of Tai-Ngan wrote to me as follows, at the beginning of May:—

"A persecution of the Christian religion of a new character has arisen in this quarter, a persecution with the sword of the tongue. The pagans and probably the magistrates have begun to cry out against the Europeans and Christians. This day, 3rd. May, a simple and good young Christian was present at a long exhortation made by a well-dressed person in a long gown, before the tribunal. She said to fathers and mothers, "Take good care of your children, for woe to them should they fall into the hands of Christians or Europeans."

"The Christians," she continued, "paid by Europeans, come in search of little boys and girls, whose eyes and hearts they first take out, and then bury them under the foundations of the churches which they are building at Zi-nan-fau and Seu-tchouan. They use the blood for staining the pillars. These pillars numbering two or three hundred, imagine how much blood must be required, and how many victims immolated."

In another letter of the 24th May, he writes:—

"By protesting before Tchi-fou and The-jun, in the tribunals of Tai-ugan, against the odious reports which are spread against the Europeans and the Christians, I have at last obtained something. I required that government should put a stop to these reports, or else should discover and imprison those who had stolen any children, and that within a week; otherwise, I would myself discover, arrest, and send them to Pekin which would evidently be little to the honour of the mandarins of the country. This was sufficient to induce the mandarins to make the necessary search in earnest, and after three days, they found a person guilty of having stolen a little girl, and who owned that he had already enchanted three whom he had kept in a cave in *Fai-chen*. The same thing was done at *Cham-chin*, and three wandering conjurors were

arrested who had enchanted a student. There is no lack here of these bad people, and their acts are attributed to us and to the Christians. What diabolical art!.....I have just learned that the unhappy child-stealer, imprisoned at Tai-ugan, has declared before the tribunal that he was paid for these thefts by me. Probably they tormented him till he was forced to say what they desired. Let us pray that God will keep off the tempest from which incalculable evils may arise to the injury of our holy religion."

We feel these calumnies all the more, that the brigands, lately returned, are now very near us, and our enemies may well take advantage of the confusion occasioned by their arrival to oppress us without meeting with any obstacles.

The mandarins to whom I had applied, coming to return my visit, I showed them the foundations of the church, telling them that if they should find a single child, both myself and the master mason were worthy of death; but they were not permitted to demolish the foundations already begun. The master mason and his workmen then begged the mandarins to put a stop to these odious reports, and having learned from the workmen themselves that they were all pagans of this town, they made them some good promises, and assured them that they gave no credit to this fable.

The workmen wished to take advantage of these reports to induce me to revoke the compact which we had made together, that they should do no work on Sunday, because it was asserted that it was on this day that I buried the children in the foundations; but I would not consent. Now, thanks be to God, the calumny has ceased, and our church has lost the name of Ouain-jeu-tan ('Tower of ten thousand buried.') People come from a distance to see it, and it is almost half built. It seems to please them, and we believe that the pagans are now convinced of the truth, especially after having read the manifesto in large letters affixed to the gate.

On the 19th inst. F. Joachim Orsi, after having described the increased prosperity of the old orphanage, tells me the two following anecdotes. A widow, wishing to make a second marriage, and finding her little girl of two years old an impediment, to get rid of her, filled a vessel with water, and plunged her into it. The child was however taken out by a pious woman, who brought her to me with her face livid and swollen; I baptised her this morning. Another little girl, newly born, was about to be thrown into the river, when a good Christian obtained her, and brought her to me to be baptised. She then took her, and nursed her as if it had been her own child.

I recommend our poor orphans to your paternal charity, and in reliance on your fervent prayers, I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Your very humble servant,

Br. Eligio Cusi, Franc. Min. observ.

Bp. of Piene, coadjutor of Chang-tong.

Extract of a Letter from Sister Sophia, Daughter of Charity, at Ning-Po, to the little associates of the Holy Childhood.

Our good Sisters of Charity at Ning Po, of whom perhaps we too seldom speak, continue their admirable labours of zeal and devotion in their two well known houses of the Infant Jesus, and St. Vincent. One of them, Sister Sophia, addresses a kind little letter to the dear little associates, inviting them to make a voyage to Ning Po, and to go straight to the house of the Infant Jesus without stopping on the road. "You will easily recognise it," she says, "it is surmounted by a cross. We may proclaim aloud, dear little associates, that it is you who thus cause the sign of our redemption to triumph in a city which is alas! still under Satan's yoke. Enter then without fear of being mistaken."

October, 1865.

Let us first ascend this little staircase, and visit the workshop; we are expected impatiently. The good sister who is coming immediately to give each his task, will be greatly pleased to shew you the performances of her pets, as she always calls these little boys when speaking of them. On one side you see are our little tailors, making clothes for their own use, but be it understood of Chinese shape and form; on the other our young apprentices in the art of holding and managing the needle, who are putting pieces to their trousers, and even to their stockings, and thus forming insensibly those habits of order and economy which are so especially needed in workpeople. Now let us visit the upper school. Our young scholars are seated in the Chinese fashion on narrow raised benches, around high tables, and on seeing you they rise, interrupting the singing of their lesson. But take care not to laugh when you observe our respectable master, whose nose is adorned with round spectacles, large enough to cover half his face; try, my dear friends, to keep your countenances at the sight of his truly magisterial air. He is a learned graduate. Salute him gravely, and then we will enter the second class. It is a charming sight. A young master, who has discovered how to make himself

at once loved and feared, keeps it in perfect order. His pupils are remarkably good, and he is himself one of our children, who endowed with singular aptitude, studied under the Lazarists. He now pays the debt of gratitude by teaching his little brothers, the children of the Holy Childhood. He devotes himself zealously to their education, and thus does us great service.

After having led her young visitors to the refectory, the laundry, the tea-oven, the dormitory, &c., Sister Sophia proceeds to speak of the sanitary advantages which the fortunate proteges of the Holy Childhood experience in their new abode.

So good is their health, she says, that the infirmary has not yet been occupied by a single invalid, and the title of Infirmary is simply honorary. During the year that we have been at the new orphanage, except among the children in the nursery, who are often brought to us in a dying state, we have had no deaths to deplore. Our large and well aired establishment enables us to assign different occupations to our little boys, which whilst serving as recreation, give them a love for work and a taste for order and neatness. In a word, we gradually fit them for the laborious life which they will soon have to embrace, and thus preserve them from numberless dangers to which contact with their pagan relations will expose them when they leave our house.

Another advantage which naturally arises from this proceeding, and perhaps the most precious of all, is that, having been happy in the orphanages opened to them by your charity, they will gladly return to them to imbibe afresh the principles once received. We already observe with pleasure that our young apprentices, and even those who are working on their own account, come every Sunday to pass the morning in the house where they learned to know and to love our holy religion. After having been present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, partaken of the modest repast which is served for them, and saluted the bishop, who kindly addresses them with some words of encouragement, they give themselves up to innocent and joyful recreation.

An affecting sight is presented by these young people when they come to the holy Table on feast days. The steady conduct of those who remain firm in the faith compensates us for the sorrow caused by the desertion of others, who being weaker, have yielded to the bad example of this neighbourhood. To you, dear associates, are we indebted, after God, for this sweet consolation.

Let me now give you a little instance of Divine goodness. A few days ago our dear Sister Portress, passing by the turn, perceived a beautiful little boy. Delighted with her discovery, she took him in her arms, and carried him to the sister of the nursery,

who gladly admitted him into her little family. But her joy was of short duration, for her treasure had immediately to be restored to the mother who came to claim him. The Sister Superior seeing us full of sorrow at this unfortunate adventure, said to us: "Well, be comforted, dear sisters, for perhaps our dear Lord may be pleased to give you two children for the one you have been obliged to restore." And in fact an hour had not passed when the bell of the turn sounded pleasantly in our ears; a little girl had been deposited there who is now our dear Allentine. The same evening our little Alexandrine arrived also, and by increasing our numbers, made us forget the disappointment of the morning. But you perhaps ask how it was that a child once deposited should be so quickly reclaimed. I will tell you.

The parents of this child were both at the dispensary. The mother having a little commission to execute in the town, gave it in charge to her husband, who as a mere amusement placed the poor baby in the turn. The mother, on coming back and not seeing her child, set to sobbing and screaming, which soon collected a considerable crowd of curious people; but of course as soon as the matter was explained the child was instantly restored to his mother. The arrival of these fortunate children always gives us great pleasure, and if unhappily we remain for a few days without any, we complain to the Blessed Virgin, begging her to represent our wishes to her Divine Son, and He never fails to send us several in succession. They are our choicest flowers, often quickly gathered by the angels to flourish in the heavenly garden.

But let us now go to the orphanage of St. Vincent at Ning-Men where are our little girls. There you will find, as at Gin-tye-tang, everything that can contribute to the comfort of the children, united to the greatest simplicity. Our first visit shall be to the nursery, where we shall deposit our dear newly baptised little ones. They will quit this asylum for a few months as soon as we can place them out at nurse. We will then go rapidly through the infirmary, filled with poor cripples, chiefly victims of the rebels, and after that go up quickly to the unassuming chapel where your proteges kneel and pray for you several times a day. We will also kneel down and pay our homage to the great Lord and Master of the house. Then after having given an encouraging look to our young dressmakers we will examine the interesting work of our embroiderers at our leisure. A table cloth, on which there is a rather grotesque representation of the Tower of Pekin will particularly call your attention. The arrangement of the colours is very well managed. Some perhaps of you may have seen specimens of these curious embroideries, all bearing the Chinese stamp, in

France. I see you like being here; but night is approaching. Our sisters see you take leave of their beloved children with regret, but they hope that you will remember them in your alms and your prayers. I make the same request, specially for our dear little boys. Go, my dear children; return to your good ship, and take with you our best wishes. Go, return to your parents, increase under their eyes in age, in wisdom, and in knowledge, and be their greatest comfort. Multiply, by the relation of what you have seen, the number of zealous apostles of the Holy Childhood. I hope that you will appreciate more highly than ever the immense good to souls procured by this admirable Society, which both peoples the earth with Christians and heaven with little angels.

COCHIN-CHINA.

From the Rt. Rev. Bishop Sohier, Vic. Apost. of Southern Cochin China, to the Director of the Society.

Our readers will recollect that Bishop Sohier honoured with his presence the first general assembly of Directors and zealous collectors of Paris, held on the 12th January, 1865. He himself related some particulars of the horrible persecutions which had for some years past afflicted the Annamite Church. The venerable apostle and confessor of the faith, now returned to his dear mission, thanks to God and the sword of France, carries on his labours with much more liberty than formerly. In the following letter, from which we have already extracted some lines in a former Number, Bishop Sohier thus relates his departure from Saigon for his mission, and gives some pleasing details about it.

15th November, 1866.

Very dear and venerated Director,

.....I embarked at Saigon, February 19, on board the ship of war which was sailing for Hue to receive the indemnity to be paid to France by Tu Duc. I had with me two missionaries as my companions. This time we had no fear of being pillaged by pirates. We met two of their junks during our voyage. Our commander ordered a cannon to be fired as a summons to them to surrender, and sent some well armed sailors to visit them. Having discovered no indications of brigandage, they were allowed to pass after having suffered great alarm.

On the 23rd, after a prosperous sail, we found ourselves opposite the port of Hue. The commandant, whose conduct towards me had

always been most honourable, took me on shore the day following in his canoe, and when at a distance from the vessel, had nine salutes of cannon fired, which made the shore tremble. It was no doubt the sound of this music which induced the mandarins to give me a most gracious reception, and their behaviour has continued to be very amiable.

I ascended the river which leads to the capital in a barge, and after having rowed for six hours I arrived at my "episcopal palace," which is thatched with straw. The orphans and the Christians of the village came to meet me, and it filled my heart with great consolation to find myself, after a long absence, again surrounded by my dear children. My joy was however decreased by observing the great poverty of my neophytes. The harvest was entirely lost last year in consequence of the drought, and the famine has been frightful. Some villages had lost a quarter or a third part of their inhabitants, carried off by famine or by cholera. The roads were full of beggars, hardly covered by their rags, many of whom fell down dead from inanition.....Thanks be to God, the harvest has this year been abundant, and we are no longer affected by the sight of so much misery.

During the Holy Week and the feast of Easter, we assembled five French missionaries, ten native priests, and a great number of persons in minor orders which enabled us to have solemn celebration of the offices, and to carry out all the ceremonies with exactness. Unfortunately, our only "cathedral" was a large sort of barn, built of bamboos and covered with straw. But this we hung with cloths of different colours, and ornamented as we best could, so that the inhabitants of the capital, amongst whom were several mandarins and their wives, who came to be present at our feast, and others, thought the effect very magnificent.

At present we are labouring at the construction of a cathedral at five minutes distance from the walls of the capital. It will cost from £180. to £200. which is all that our slender means will allow us to expend. Our building will at least enable us to have the happiness of reserving the Blessed Sacrament, a privilege of which we have been hitherto deprived on account of the want of room, and of the persecution.

There are three other parishes in my mission, which have built very tolerable churches for the reservation of the Holy Sacrament. In order to be able to do this, three good neophytes have imposed upon themselves all sorts of sacrifices, even the sale of some of their fields. As to the other parishes, they are so poor that I know not when they will succeed in building churches by any means suitable.

I was accompanied on my pastoral visit to preach the jubilee, by three missionaries, seven native priests, and a dozen clerks to instruct the faithful. I was everywhere received with great pomp and demonstrations of joy. When I was approaching near to any parish the inhabitants came to meet me with drums, and all the other instruments of music known in this country. I sang pontifical mass in every district, exposed the Blessed Sacrament for forty hours, and made long processions, which were joined by the neighbouring parishes, each with its banner and its cross. The men and women walked in two separate files, with order and recollectedness, and sang the prayers in their own language.

The general retreat of all the priests of my mission during the week of Pentecost, was followed by an ordination, when I conferred orders on seven deacons, seventeen minors, and nine tonsured; all walked clad in tunics, dalmatics, chasubles or copes. The pagans, who flocked in crowds to enjoy this novel spectacle, formed a thick hedge on each side, keeping a respectful silence. Our neophytes had the more ardour about all these religious ceremonies because the greater number of them had never seen anything similar, the persecution having lasted about forty years. They all kept their jubilee with extraordinary fervour, men and women without any exception. God be a thousand times praised for the abundant graces He has granted us at the prayer of His Vicar; whose blessing I had implored for myself and my mission with the most earnest entreaties.

The number of children baptised is this year still very small, in consequence of the pecuniary distress which does not allow us to hire baptisers. It has been necessary before all to think of the support of the orphanages, the most important work, and that which does most honour to religion. Had we the means we could get a considerable number of children baptised. One of our two orphanages is situated near Dong-hai, the chief town of the province of Quang-Binh, and the other, a more important one, is at the gates of the capital. Its position in the midst of the great centre of population renders it suitable for all the enlargement which the alms of the pious associates permit us to give it. This orphanage is like a light-house which shines afar off, and proclaims to the world the inexhaustible charity which is inspired by the Christian religion. It has been the cause of the extinction of the absurd prejudices which were formerly prevalent amongst these people, and which interposed so many obstacles to the baptism of pagan children. It is, in short, our most eloquent preacher. As I live very near, my pleasantest recreation is to go every day and refresh myself after my usual occupation amongst my dear children, and to speak

to them of their European brothers and sisters, to whom they are indebted for their lives both of body and soul, and who thus take the place of their fathers and mothers. Besides the other prayers which they make for all benefactors, living or dead, they recite the third part of the rosary every day for them.

According to your recommendation I have been occupied since my return to my mission in the establishment of schools, and my most sanguine hopes have been surpassed.

In the course of five or six months my children have learned to read their own language, written in our characters, quite fluently. Some of the boys read to me in their turn during my meals. The girls learn with equal facility, and one of the glories of the Holy Childhood will be to have established the first girls' school that was ever seen in the Annamite kingdom. For as in this country no kind of writing has been known, except in Chinese characters, whose number is almost infinite, since one stands for every word, reading is accessible only to those rich young people who desire public employments. With the exception, therefore, of our nuns there are not two out of ten thousand women who can read. This is the reason why I so much desire that these Chinese characters should disappear, and that European letters, which are easy to every one, should be substituted for them.

Our pagan neighbours, observing the rapidity with which our children learn to read, are beginning to send theirs also to school. There is even a mandarin amongst our scholars, who was sent by the minister of foreign affairs.

The continual intercourse which the Annamites will henceforth be obliged to keep up with the French, render it a matter of necessity that they should learn our letters.

But that the synagogue may be honourably interred, as well as to attract a greater number of pupils to our schools, a converted mandarin devotes himself to the Holy Childhood, with his two little sons, and form a class for Chinese characters.

When our children have learned to read, to write, and to calculate, and above all when they have been thoroughly instructed in religious truth, I propose to make some of them schoolmasters and mistresses. Those boys who intend to remain single, may fulfil the duties of lay-brothers and catechists for the native priests. Those boys and girls who have no particular aptness for study, can be employed on the farm, where they will learn other occupations.

At the head of this orphanage I have placed a deacon, who, together with another clerk, continually superintends it, keeps the accounts, attends to the boys' school, and teaches the catechism.

The education of the girls is committed to four Cochinchinese nuns.

Amongst the boys formed by the Holy Childhood there is one in our college of An-ninh, who is the first in his studies; and I have sent another to the general seminary at Pennag who bears an equally good character. Thus it seems that the Holy Childhood is called to play an important part, and to contribute greatly to the conversion of this people. Thus are accomplished the words of Scripture: "*Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.*"

Pray accept the assurance of the profound respect and lively gratitude, with which I have the honour to be, Rev. Sir,

Your very humble and devoted servant,

Jas. Hyac Sohier,

Bp. of Gadara, and Vic. Apost. of
Southern Cochinchina.

From the Rev. H. Le-mée, of the Society of Foreign Missions,
Miss. Apost. in Cochinchina, to the Director of the Society.

Saigon, 25 Feb., 1867.

Sir and very dear Director,

As I told you in my former letter we were to have a solemn celebration of the feast of the Holy Childhood, in the chapel of our orphanage at Saigon. Notes of invitation had been sent to all the European ladies in the town, the day had been fixed for the 19th January, and Bishop Miche, our Vic. Apost. was to preside. It had already been settled that Miss Melanie de la Grandiere and her young brother were to go round for the collection after the services. We all looked forwards to a joyous and holy morning. But man proposes and God disposes.

A few days before, the small pox broke out in our orphanage, and the cases soon became so numerous and so violent, that mothers were forbidden by the doctors to take their children into the house. Our poor orphans have been suffering for six weeks with this horrible scourge. There have been as many as fifty sick at the same time, and some hardly cured have been attacked anew with the same violence as before, their faces offering a frightful spectacle. Five have died, but the terrible disorder seems now to be a little abating, so that we hope this trial to our poor orphans will soon come to an end. You will easily believe that our little feast in honour of the Childhood of our Lord has been postponed indefinitely,

though all was prepared for it. But what is deferred is not lost.

I shall supply the loss of the history of this feast by some facts which cannot fail to interest our young readers, and which will once more prove to them how important to the eye of faith is our dear Society of the Holy Childhood.

"On the 5th of November last," writes one of the priests of our mission, "I had just returned from purchasing my supper, when the notables of the village entered my room, requesting me to go with all speed to baptise a child of ten years old, who had been seized with a fit of frenzy. She herself had asked for the father. I went immediately to the house pointed out, when I found the child in the arms of her mother uttering cries of terror, and behaving like one possessed. Dreadful as were her sufferings, she had not lost consciousness. I first asked if she would be baptised. 'O! yes, father, I wish to be baptised,' was her immediate reply. I then asked her some questions upon the most important truths of our faith, to which she replied in a most satisfactory manner; only her words were interrupted by a cry which met my heart: 'O how tired I am.' Do you wish to become a little child of our dear Lord? Do you desire to go to Him in paradise? 'Oh! yes, father, I wish to be with our dear Lord; I wish to go to heaven.' I gave her the Sacrament which made her a child of God and of the holy Church, in the presence of her father and mother still pagans. 'Father,' she said, 'baptise both my dear parents.' After a pause, she said: 'I am going to heaven,' and at the same time she raised her little hands towards heaven and embraced her mother. I left the house full of comfort and quite affected by the feelings so touchingly expressed by this dear child; two hours after she rendered up her soul to God. She is now in heaven, where she is praying for the conversion of her parents and for the associates of the Holy Childhood."

"A young woman, a pagan," writes the same missionary, "came to me to sell her child. She was about two years old, and sickly, not having more than a few hours to live. I immediately baptised her, and having no one at hand to whom I could entrust her, I begged the mother to keep her and feed her till the following day; I procured the rice which she required for her own support, and she at last unwillingly consented to my request. But on the approach of night she deposited her child at the door of the Church and fled away. Some Christians coming out of the church after evening prayers, struck against a little corpse, and asked me to come and see it, and we found the poor child lying on the ground, naked, and its face covered with a mat, but already a prey

to thousands of ants. Was this innocent creature already dead, or had she died after the departure of the unfeeling mother who had abandoned her in this unnatural manner? Pray then, dear little angel, for this benevolent mother the Holy Childhood, for this numerous association of little ones like yourself, that one day you may receive and embrace them in heaven."

I have this moment received a letter from Father Jourdain, our venerable almoner in the island of Saigon. He relates such an edifying story of one of our dear orphans who was attacked by small pox, that I shall exactly transcribe it.

"The day before yesterday I was called by the good sisters of S. Vincent of Paul, to confess and administer to a little boy of the Holy Childhood, about eleven or twelve years old. He was ill of the small pox, and gave serious uneasiness. On my arrival I saw the poor child lying on his bed, and near him an Annamite woman, upon whom his eyes were constantly fixed, though from her position at the head of the bed he could not do so without putting himself into an uneasy posture. On perceiving me he exclaimed, without turning his eyes: 'My father, pray baptise her; do you not wish to be baptised mother? and my little sister too; baptise her Father.' I immediately understood that the grace of God was at work, causing this poor child to forget his own sufferings and the thought of death, in his anxiety for the salvation of his mother and sister. I admired for a moment this interesting picture, and the supernatural solicitude of the child in silence, and then, much affected, I said gravely and solemnly: 'Listen, good woman; it is our good God who makes your child speak in this manner, and if you do not follow his advice, you will perhaps be guilty of a great sin. If you are converted you will meet him in heaven.' The child continued to insist, following every movement of his mother, who settled the little head upon the pillow lest he should fall in turning himself to look at her. 'Baptise her, father, I beg you,' he said. 'But,' I replied, 'she is not yet instructed.' 'Oh! I will instruct her myself.' 'But she does not wish it.' 'O yes! do you not wish it mother, and my sister also?'"

The sister was not there—I sent a catechist for her, that I might know more exactly who the woman was, her abode and what might be expected of her. Whilst waiting for the result of this inquiry, I confessed my young preacher, and administered the sacraments. Feeling an inward hope that God would not take away this guardian angel of his mother, I knelt down and recommended him very earnestly to the protection of the Blessed Virgin. Amongst other things, I asked him which he would prefer, to die and go to heaven, or to remain here to take care of his mother? His reply was more

prudent than my question. "As God pleases." I approved this by telling him to pray much for his mother. As for her, she went in and out, neither saying yes or no to the entreaties of her child or to my own. She made objections to my catechist; she did not appear to be at all touched. What beauty and what peace are seen where the grace of God dwells! How gladly would I have embraced that little disfigured saint! How lovely he appeared! How I loved him! And how different is the position and the life of his mother! I am still waiting for the end of this affecting scene. The name of the young Annamite is Ives Tan; he is a very intelligent child, god-child to the Rev. F. Crac, pro-vicar of southern Tong-King.

Such is the story in its touching simplicity. I have been several times since to see the dear little Ives, whom we still hope to save. He is a charming child, whom I have long known; since, as F. Tomdom writes, he wears the name of my intimate friend F. Crac, who gave it to him when he baptised him during his residence amongst us at Saignon.

Recommending myself to your remembrance in the holy sacrifice, I beg you, very dear Rev. Sir, to believe my renewed assurance of respectful devotion.

He le Mée, Missionary Apostolic.

BRITISH INDIA.—CENTRAL BENGAL.

We give some extracts from a history sent from Jessore, to the Rev. Father Limana, superior of the mission of Central Bengal, (Congregation of Foreign Missions of Milan.) We have often spoken to the Society of the zeal and devotion of our worthy sisters, who have become the mothers of the poor orphans in these pious orphanages, which founded by the Holy Childhood, are sustained and prosper, under God's blessing, by its alms. We contemplate here a different picture. Carried by the breath of charity, some of these admirable sisters have gone afar, like the Good Shepherd, in search of stray sheep. The poor women of the lowest Indian caste, not being able to come to the sisters for instruction, they have themselves, treading in the steps of the missionaries, and in spite of all kinds of fatigue, gone out to seek them in their huts, and there, seated by their side, in the midst of their rough work, and the cries of their babes, they have appeared like angels of good news. Let us hear Sister Mary Benedetta. Her story gives us one of those pictures which have so pious and practical a charm,

that it is impossible to contemplate it without emotion, nor without blessing the holy religion whose work it is.

Jessore, February 25, 1865.

(From the Italian.)

Our good superior had willingly consented to remain in the orphanage to take care of the little girls, and we set out from hence on the night of the 2nd of January. This splendid night, illuminated by the moon, hardly yielded in brilliancy to the day, and invited us to meditation and prayer. We two sisters were in a carriage, driven by the Rev. F. Marietti; the Buosdio escorted us on horseback. The solemn silence was broken only by the noise made by the horses and the wheels. From time to time a rough shake to our worn out equipage, came to arouse us, and, withdrawing us for a moment from our pathetic meditations, caused some broken words to rise to our lips.

We seemed to advance but slowly, so greatly was I longing to arrive at my destination amongst the poor natives, into the midst of whom, I had already in thought and heart, a thousand times transported myself. At last, the dawn appeared, and we were at the village of Benialy. We were immediately surrounded by Christian women, and stopped a moment that we might receive their welcomes, which, though rather rough, were full of frank cordiality. They would willingly have detained us, but we had to go first to another station; so, after having made a promise to return, we again set off.

It was intended that we should complete our journey in palanquins. But I cannot accustom myself to this mode of transport; I feel so much repugnance to abandoning myself to the discretion of four panting creatures, overcome with heat, who in their monotonous chant, seem to lament their fate and the hardheartedness of those who place them almost in the same rank with beasts of burden, that I resisted, and begged so successfully, that it was at last decided that we should go on foot. It was only a question of thirteen or fourteen miles, and although we were a little enfeebled by fever, we were so full of spirit that we looked upon the distance as nothing. Forward, then!

The missionary fathers had also dismounted, so that we were all on foot. Some natives carried our little baggage on their backs, and showed us the road, or rather the path across the country. We thus proceeded. At half past eight in the morning, we reached Culenhat, where it was thought best to make a halt. We were soon surrounded by a crowd of people, chiefly women and children;

I think the whole village must have been out. They looked at us with an air of stupid astonishment which I cannot describe; everything about us, from head to foot, seemed strange to these poor people. They assailed us with the most singular questions, and then brought their sick, asking medicine for their cure. And we had nothing. The power of Him who cures all the sick was required. These poor people awakened all our pity; we said some pious words, and told them of God. They heard us with stupid wonder—they approved, if you will, but nothing more. Women are soon gained over, but you know that in this country they go for nothing. But, patience; it is God alone who can soften their hearts and render them docile to His appeals.

We had taken refuge under a magnificent tamarind tree, the charming and delicate branches of which nearly reached the ground, and under this hospitable shade we hoped for a little rest, and the opportunity for pursuing our usual devotions; but this was a vain hope; we were soon found out, and we were again surrounded, without having a moment's respite, till the time for departure arrived.

When we recommenced our journey the sun poured down its burning rays, but we feared not his shafts, protected as we were by our large twice lined umbrellas. After having crossed an immense plain of rice ground, uneven, rough, burnt up, sown with patches of straw, and intersected by a thousand crevices, we entered at night-fall a poor hut, in the village of Giardoncati, which serves at the same time for a church and as an asylum for the missionary during his apostolic course.

Our first care was to arrange an altar for the day following to the best of our power, and there enclosed by three poor mats, we had the comfort of assisting every day at the holy Sacrifice, and of feeding frequently on the Bread of Angels. Blessed be the Lord for this signal favour!

On Sundays we were obliged to clear away everything, in order to make the place large enough to hold the Christians who came to the celebration of the holy Mysteries, yet there was not room for them all. We went to lodge in another little hut, only a few paces distant, but more close and confined than the cell of a cloister. It had no other opening than the little entrance door and some holes at the corners of the mats, and besides, having been used as a kitchen there was hanging just over our heads like a veil, a beautiful tent of smoked spider's webs. Here we could meditate upon death like so many Trappists; but in spite of all these discomforts this poor abode was so dear to us that we certainly would not have exchanged it for the famous Crystal Palace.

Without, the scene was quite different; all was beautiful and smiling. The air, the horizon, the surrounding country sprinkled here and there with groups of palm trees, which being then in flower exhaled the most charming perfume; and added to this the melodious song of a thousand charming birds, all invited us to open our hearts to a holy joy.

We remained a month to instruct the poor women of the place; but the time was short enough. Belonging to the lowest and most despised castes, they were extremely gross, ignorant, and savage. Three whole weeks were required to make them understand in some degree the principal mysteries of our holy religion, of which they were completely ignorant, or which they had entirely forgotten. The worst of it is, that overwhelmed with work and struggling against want, they had hardly time to listen to us. We therefore went twice a day to see them in their miserable cabins, and then on the very field of their labours where they were working furiously with the foot at a machine for peeling rice, or were preparing it for food in the midst of the little ones whom they constantly carried astride upon their hips; there, I say, we were obliged to give our instructions. Just imagine the opportunities afforded by such a time and place.

But what our feeble endeavours could not obtain the grace of our Lord has accomplished. On the 28th January, Septuagesima Sunday, four of these women were baptised, and the others, thirteen in number, made their confession. The hut was the confessional; a mat of the wall served as a grille; the missionary remained within, the penitent without; no better arrangement could be made.

Greatly desirous to depose their faults at the feet of the priest, these poor creatures set about the task with all their heart. Our dear Lord must surely have accepted their good will. An unusual peace and tranquillity shone on their bronzed countenances. All these women appeared modest and contrite. How true it is that the influence of interior grace shines forth without, and pierces even through a veil of coarseness and deformity.

This day was indeed a feast. The native catechist had chosen it as appropriate for *giving the rice* for the first time to his little girl, a child of seven years old, and making a little rejoicing as is customary here on such occasions. The friends went one after the other to give her a little rice, with a thousand caresses, and then sat down under a banana to the feast to which they had been invited.

The day following was rather cloudy, which was very pleasant,

as it was the day fixed for our departure. We set out at 9 a.m. accompanied by the catechist; Fr. Marietti having again a slight attack of fever was to follow us later.

A Mussulman woman with whom we had made a slight acquaintance, followed the same road as ourselves. Wherever we passed the people ran to look at us, and this woman immediately pronounced our panegyric saying: "They have cured all the sick." Though there was some exaggeration in this language, it was not altogether false. If you had seen the crowd of sick people who besieged our door during our sojourn at Giordoncati! They came from great distances, and were of all castes. Most of them were suffering from intermittent fevers, and we gave them a slight purgative, quinine, and bitter decoctions; this was all our treatment. Many recovered under these simple remedies, and we thus obtained a high reputation at small cost.

We continued our journey by degrees, and when the sun rose and the heat became insupportable, we rested under some leafy tree. We thus got nearer and nearer to Benialy to which place we returned before sunset. The women of the country but recently converted to Catholicism, were profoundly ignorant, but showed great desire to be instructed. During the first days of our arrival it poured with rain, and our hut, placed on an eminence, had a slippery and difficult approach, and yet with what haste did they come morning and evening to instruction. At the beating of the *dauka*, a sort of drum which served as a bell, they ran from all quarters; and though shivering with cold and hardly covered by a few wet tatters, they seated themselves around us, and appeared to hang upon our lips. It was wonderful to see elderly women, who could not be expected to be very apt at exercises of the memory, trying to repeat and to retain the truths which were announced to them. We were never tired of wondering at it, and of blessing the Lord.

Three weeks thus passed quickly away, and on Sunday last, the First in Lent, nine catechumens were baptised, six girls who had been lately married made their first confession, and four happier still approached the eucharistic banquet. May the Lord preserve them in these good dispositions.

The Monday following we returned to Jessore. But here I stop. I will only add that we have been treated grandly, and obliged to travel in a palanquin. My bearers, as if in revenge for my former refusal, uttered their cries more loudly than usual, and these groans made me regret still more the more beautiful country that I had so reluctantly quitted. Oh how happy I

should be were I permitted to pass the rest of my days with those poor people in their humble cabins, rendering them my little service. Perhaps this is a vain fancy, an illusion, a dream. Whatever it be, it is certain that I often pray God for its fulfilment.

Sister Maria Benedetta.



